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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS OF FIFTH GRADE PUPILS AND THE INTEREST CONTENT OF SELECTED BASAL READERS

by

© DAVID H. JENKINSON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils and the Interest Content of Selected Basal Readers" submitted by David H. Jenkinson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Date ...July 24....., 1973

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between the categories of fiction children seek to read independently and what they are required to read in basal readers. The investigation was divided into four phases, and had three purposes: (1) to identify the expressed independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction, (2) to identify the categories of fiction included in selected basal readers, and (3) to discover to what degree the fiction content of basal readers corresponded to the breadth and depth of fifth graders' independent reading interests.

To carry out the first purpose, the initial phase of the study involved designing an instrument called an Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire which consisted of 18 pairs of parallel annotations representing 18 fiction categories. Students were to circle YES, NO or ? to indicate whether or not they would like to read a story based on the annotation. The instrument was administered to 217 grade five pupils (112 boys, 105 girls) in eight classrooms from three schools of the Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Five basal readers, identified in an annotated list of recommended reading materials prepared by the Curriculum Services Department of the Edmonton Public School Board as being suitable for fifth grade pupils, formed the sample for the study's second purpose. The fiction stories in the

readers were read by the investigator and each was categorized according to one of the 18 fiction categories used in the instrument.

The third purpose of the study was met by comparing the fiction interests of fifth grade boys and girls with the fiction content of basal readers when that content was expressed in terms of (1) the number of favored fiction categories of each sex present in each basal reader and (2) the number of pages devoted to each sexes' favored fiction categories.

With regard to reading interests it was found that six fiction categories received more than 50 percent of boys' responses showing interest while girls demonstrated interest in ten fiction areas. Boys had dislike for six categories while girls only indicated dislike for one fiction category.

None of the five basal readers contained stories representing all of the 18 fiction categories. The greatest number of categories found in a reader was 13. Although four fiction categories were common to all five readers, the treatment of the same category among readers in terms of the number of stories or pages varied considerably.

In no case were all of the fiction categories favored by fifth grade boys or girls found in a basal reader. When the number of pages of favored fiction content for each sex was expressed as a percentage of the total number of fiction pages in each reader, it was found that

generally more of the fiction content was of interest to girls than to boys.

The study concluded with several implications for educators and publishers and some suggestions for further research.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
	Purpose of the Study	4
	Research Questions	4
	Definitions	5
	Limitations	7
	Significance of the Study	8
	Overview of the Study	9
II.	A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
	Psychological Background to the Study of Interests	11
	The Role of Interest in the Reading Process	15
	Reading Interests	21
	Instruments and Procedures Used to Collect Data on Reading Interests	25
	Basal Readers and Independent Reading Interests Research	32
	Summary	37
III.	INSTRUMENTATION, RESEARCH PROCEDURES, AND ANALYSIS OF THE INSTRUMENT	40
	Instrumentation	41
	Design of the Instrument	41
	Rationale for the Development of a New Instrument to Investigate Reading Interests	41
	The Fictitious Annotated Titles Questionnaire	42
	Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire	43

CHAPTER PAGE

Identification of Fiction Categories . . 45

Descriptive Annotations 48

Readability 50

Format of the Instrument 54

Validity Studies 57

Content Validity 57

Validity of Pupils' Responses 59

Research Procedures 61

Pilot Studies 61

Sample 64

Data Collection 65

Treatment of the Data 67

Evaluation of the Instrument 68

Summary 74

IV. PROCEDURES FOR BASAL READERS ANALYSIS 76

The Sample of Basal Readers 76

Identification of the Basal Reader Fiction Content 79

Treatment of the Data 80

V. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA 82

Independent Reading Interests 82

Research Question One: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils in the Area of Fiction? 82

Research Question Two: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Boys in the Area of Fiction? 89

CHAPTER PAGE

Research Question Three: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Girls in the Area of Fiction? 96

Comparison and Summary of Fifth Grade Boys' and Girls' Independent Reading Interests in the Area of Fiction 102

Fiction Content of the Basal Readers 107

Research Question Four: What Categories of Fiction are Represented in Each of the Basal Readers? 107

Research Question Five: In Terms of Numbers of Stories and Numbers of Pages, to What Extent is Each Category of Fiction Represented in Each Basal Reader? 109

Comparison of the Fiction Content of the Basal Readers and the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils 117

Research Question Six: Do the Basal Readers Contain the Categories of Fiction that were Favored by Fifth Grade Boys and Girls? 117

Research Question Seven: Do any of the Basal Readers Contain a Range and Depth of Fiction Categories that Correspond to the Expressed Favored Reading Interests of Fifth Grade (1) Boys (2) Girls? 119

Under Canadian Skies 119

Beyond the Horizon 122

Crossroads 125

Vistas 127

But Life is Calling You 129

Summary 132

CHAPTER PAGE

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS 136

Summary 136

Purpose 136

Design 137

Findings and Conclusions Concerning the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils 139

Research Question One: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils in the Area of Fiction? 139

Research Question Two: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Boys in the Area of Fiction? 140

Research Question Three: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Girls in the Area of Fiction? 141

Findings and Conclusions Concerning the Fiction Content of Basal Readers . . . 142

Research Question Four: What Categories of Fiction are Represented in Each of the Basal Readers? 143

Research Question Five: In Terms of Numbers of Stories and Numbers of Pages, to What Extent is Each Category of Fiction Represented in Each Basal Reader? 143

Findings and Conclusions Concerning the Relationship Between the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils and the Fiction Content of Basal Readers . 144

Research Question Six: Do the Basal Readers Contain the Categories of Fiction that were Favored by Fifth Grade Boys and Girls? 145

CHAPTER PAGE

Research Question Seven: Do any of the Basal Readers Contain a Range and Depth of Fiction Categories that Correspond to the Expressed Favored Reading Interests of Fifth Grade (1) Boys (2) Girls? 146

Implications 148

Suggestions for Further Research 151

BIBLIOGRAPHY 154

APPENDIX A: Fiction Categories and Definitions 165

APPENDIX B: Keys to the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire 170

I. Key by Annotation Number 171

II. Key by Fiction Category 172

APPENDIX C: Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire 173

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
I.	THORNDIKE-LORGE RATING OF THE 498 DIFFERENT WORDS CONTAINED IN THE A.N.-T.Q.	53
II.	AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE	65
III.	ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS IN EACH FICTION CATEGORY	70
IV.	DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS REPRESENTING BIOGRAPHICAL FICTION BY TOTAL SAMPLE AND BY SEX	72
V.	DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS REPRESENTING VOCATIONAL FICTION BY TOTAL SAMPLE AND BY SEX	73
VI.	ANALYSIS OF BASAL READERS BY COPYRIGHT, DATE, PAGINATION AND CONTENT	77
VII.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FICTION STORIES IN THE BASAL READERS	78
VIII.	INTERJUDGE RELIABILITY ON THE SUBCATEGORIZATION OF FICTION STORIES	80
IX.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES	84
X.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST	85
XI.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NO RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE	87
XII.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER	88
XIII.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES	90
XIV.	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST	92

TABLE PAGE

XV. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' NO RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE 93

XVI. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER 95

XVII. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES 97

XVIII. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST 98

XIX. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' NO RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE 100

XX. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER 101

XXI. FICTION CATEGORIES OF INTEREST TO BOYS AND GIRLS BY LEVEL OF INTEREST 103

XXII. FICTION CATEGORIES OF INTEREST COMMON TO BOYS AND GIRLS 104

XXIII. FICTION CATEGORIES OF DISLIKE BY BOYS AND GIRLS 106

XXIV. FICTION CATEGORIES IN BASAL READERS 108

XXV. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STORIES IN FICTION CATEGORIES BY BASAL READERS 110

XXVI. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PAGES IN FICTION CATEGORIES BY BASAL READERS 114

XXVII. BOYS' FAVORED FICTION CATEGORIES IN BASAL READERS 118

XXVIII. GIRLS' FAVORED FICTION CATEGORIES IN BASAL READERS 120

XXIX. UNDER CANADIAN SKIES: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS 121

TABLE PAGE

XXX. BEYOND THE HORIZON: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS 123

XXXI. CROSSROADS: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS 126

XXXII. VISTAS: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS . . 128

XXXIII. BUT LIFE IS CALLING YOU: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS 130

XXXIV. NUMBER OF CATEGORIES OF FICTION AND PERCENTAGE OF PAGES FAVORED BY BOYS AND GIRLS, BY BASAL READERS 133

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1.	SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE ANNOTATION	56
2.	DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY APPLIED TO "YES" RESPONSES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSSIBLE RESPONSES	68
3.	DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY APPLIED TO "NO" RESPONSES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSSIBLE RESPONSES	68

CHAPTER I

I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The development of children's reading skills and abilities is one of the most important tasks of the elementary school. The ability to read proficiently is an essential tool for learning a large portion of subject matter throughout the successive school levels. "The ability to read has been identified as one of the most important skills a person can possess for the achievement of socio-economic success at the present time (Brown, 1971, p.1)." The reading textbook has been the traditional means through which reading skills are taught. Deierhoi (1968) stated that "over 85% of all teachers use basal readers in the teaching of reading (p.18)," while Savage (1970) claimed that "basals are the major tools used for teaching reading in about 90 percent of our schools (p.22)." In addition to having the instrumental purpose of teaching the skills of reading, the content of the basal reader is supposed to be motivational. The story content of the basal reader is intended to fit the predispositions of the children so that they will want to learn to read.

Whether or not the basal reader achieves its motivational task is a matter of some debate among educators. On the one hand there were those teachers who thought that the basal content "turned their pupils off" because the

"subject matter is out of line with their interests and background (Savage, 1970, p.24)." Those teachers who defended the content of the basal readers did so on the grounds that "while the stories may be boring to adults, the children like them... (Bond & Tinker, 1963, p.55)."

It is not unusual for publishers of basal series to state that their readers contain "stories and poems on a wide variety of themes carefully selected for their appeal to children (McIntosh & Orchard, 1963, p.44)." Furthermore, it is claimed that the basis for the content selection is research.

> Textbook publishers usually give careful attention to the research dealing with group interests at various ages when they choose the contents of their books (Robinson, 1955, p.173).

Witty (1963) disagreed with Robinson, however.

> Most textbook companies, one of the groups who should be capitalizing on information available on reading interests, show little evidence of the application of this vital information in their materials (pp.10-11).

Zimet cautioned that most of the criticisms of the content of basal readers by educators are "based on impressions rather than on any extensive analysis of the material (1972, p.xiv)."

The question as to whether or not the contents of basal readers are of interest to children is more than just the topic for an academic exercise. "Interest will determine not only whether an individual will learn to read but how well he will learn, how much he will read, and in what areas he will read (Jenkinson, 1964, p.54)."

In the fifth grade, a pupil is on the threshold of achieving functional literacy (Zimet, 1972) and the ability to read widely and independently. A review of the literature reveals that the intermediate grades are the years during which children are likely to do more reading for pleasure than during any other period of their lives. At the same time the children are beginning to read independently, they are also continuing to receive instruction in reading skills through the use of the content of basal readers. If the basal readers do not contain content which is of interest to children, then the reading which is taking place is for the sake of the skill itself.

Townsend (1970) warned:

> What is read without interest, if it provides nevertheless for the exercise of skills, may help to train the pupil, but never most efficiently or permanently. And, if the experience does not "matter" to him, he will rarely be impelled to repeat it of his own accord (p.297).

It would appear that in the intermediate grades, the pupil is entering a critical period in his reading development. Having nearly achieved functional literacy which would provide the capability to pursue the wider world of reading, it is possible that because of an absence of interesting content in the basal readers, the child has come to see the process of learning to read as an end in itself. The pupil may believe that he has mastered this process and therefore need not proceed any further with reading.

Taking into consideration the importance of interest in the learning-to-read process and the importance of the basal reader in the basal-oriented curriculum, this study was designed to investigate the relationship between what children seek to read independently and what they are required to read in basal readers.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were:

1. to identify the expressed independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction;
2. to identify the categories or types of fiction included in selected basal readers;
3. to discover to what degree the fiction content of basal readers corresponded to the breadth and depth of fifth graders' independent reading interests.

The following questions were posed to accomplish this three-fold purpose and to clarify the scope of the description.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Identification of Fifth Grade Pupils' Reading Interests

Question One. What are the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction?

Question Two. What are the independent reading

interests of fifth grade boys in the area of fiction?

Question Three. What are the independent reading interests of fifth grade girls in the area of fiction?

Identification of the Fiction Content of the Basal Readers

Question Four. What categories of fiction are represented in each of the basal readers?

Question Five. In terms of number of stories and number of pages, to what extent is each category of fiction represented in each basal reader?

Comparison of the Fiction Content of the Basal Readers and The Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils.

Question Six. Do the basal readers contain the categories of fiction that were favored by fifth grade boys and girls?

Question Seven. Do any of the basal readers contain a range and depth of fiction categories that correspond to the expressed favored reading interests of fifth grade:

1. boys?
2. girls?

IV. DEFINITIONS

Basal Readers are the core of "an interrelated set of materials for teaching fundamental reading skills. At a minimum, such a set requires a sequence of reading materials for the learners, graded in difficulty, and guides or manuals that provide directions on how to teach with these materials

(Harris, 1972, p.310)."

A Descriptive Annotation is a note of 40±5 words which describes the content of a book or story and indicates its plot, characters, theme, and setting.

Fiction consists of "a literary work whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact. The category of literature comprising works of the kind, including novels (and) short stories... (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1970, p.488)."

An Interest "is a characteristic disposition organized through experience, which impels an individual to seek out particular objects, activities, understandings, skills or goals for attention or acquisition (Getzels, 1956, p.7)."

Independent Reading Interests (usually shortened to Reading Interests) are categories of reading which are self-selected by an individual to read for recreational purposes. This type of reading is considered to be distinctly different from the reading assigned for the purpose of satisfying a parent, teacher, librarian, etc. The categories of fiction identified by the instrument represent the universe of children's reading interests in fiction. In this study a child's reading interests were identified by a "Yes" response to an annotation.

V. LIMITATIONS

In interpreting the data of this study, the following limitations should be borne in mind.

1. The study was limited to the examination of fifth grade pupils' reading interests in the area of fiction.
2. Only those fifth grade basal readers recommended by the Edmonton Public School Board in its publication "Elementary Reading Materials - A Revised List" were used in this study. The use of other fifth grade basal readers might produce different results.
3. Children's reading interests may be affected by other equally important factors such as format, illustrations, typography, etc. which are not measurable by the technique of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. Within the study it was assumed that the voluntary reader exposed to a book or story accepts or rejects it on the basis of cues to its content contained in some "display" factor, e.g. title, subtitle, "blurb", "puffs", or a sample of text. The reader is, in effect, attempting to predict from a fraction of the total information available whether or not the item is interesting enough to read.
4. Since it is natural for children to desire to please authority figures, it was possible that responses were influenced by the children's desire to give answers that they thought would please the classroom teacher or the investigator.

5. The number of possible responses by the children was limited by the number of choices offered by the measuring instrument.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Zimet (1966, p.125) noted that a motivational index of the various reading textbooks would give the classroom teacher significant help in individualizing her instructional program. Narrowly the findings of this study will provide assistance to grade five teachers in the Edmonton Public School System in selecting one or more basal readers which meet their classes' needs from the group of basal readers which comprised the sample and which were recommended by the school jurisdiction. In a wider application, the availability of a thorough analysis of fiction categories including definitions should permit a teacher to analyze the contents of any basal reader and to compare its contents with the reading interests of fifth grade pupils to obtain an indication of the motivational qualities of the reader. If a teacher believes her class not to be a representative sample of a normal fifth grade population, the brevity of the instrument to investigate reading interests of pupils should enable the teacher to administer the instrument conveniently and to ascertain her classes' reading interests.

The results of the study will provide textbook publishers and teachers with up-to-date information on the reading interests of fifth grade pupils. This knowledge

will allow the publishers to make appropriate modifications in their materials. Information on reading interests will aid teachers in selecting materials for room and school libraries which will more likely appeal to the greatest number of pupils. As well, knowing what categories of fiction are of interest will assist the teacher in identifying stories to read to children. The information yielded by the instrument used to measure reading interests will help the teacher in extending and enriching reading tastes. Particular attention can be paid to the fiction areas which are disliked by boys or girls. Appropriate activities can be carried out to change these dislikes to interests. Also of value in extending reading tastes will be the responses of uncertainty which identify areas where totally rigid patterns of thinking by fifth grade pupils about fiction categories have not yet crystallized.

Finally, in developing a new instrument for identifying reading interests, the investigator hoped to establish another base for further research.

VII. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study consisted of four separate but related phases. The first was the design and construction of an instrument to investigate the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction. The second involved the administration of the instrument to fifth grade students in order to ascertain their reading interests.

The analysis of the fiction content of 5 fifth grade basal readers constituted the third phase while a comparison of the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils with the fiction content of the basal readers was the final stage.

Chapter II reviews the literature relating to the psychology of interests, the importance of interest in reading, reading interests, the instruments and procedures used to collect data on reading interests, and the research on basal readers and independent reading interests. Chapter III describes the construction of the instrument to identify the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils, the research procedures used including the pilot study, the description of the student sample, and the collection and methods of analyzing the data on independent reading interests. The chapter concludes with a post-administration analysis of the instrument used to identify reading interests. Chapter IV describes the sample of basal readers, explains the procedures for identifying the fiction categories contained within the readers and sets forth how the data were treated. In Chapter V the results of the analyses of data relevant to the research questions and the hypothesis are described in detail. The final chapter contains the summary and discussion of the findings and suggests the implications for education and future research.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature initially examines the psychological background to the study of interests. This examination is followed by a section that explores professional opinions and research concerning the role of interests in the reading process. Following is a section which reviews research which has investigated various variables which might influence children's reading interests. The fourth segment of the review of related literature considers critically the methodologies used to ascertain reading interests. The final section examines research which has looked at the relationship between children's reading interests and the content of basal readers.

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF INTERESTS

Definitions of interest abound. English and English (Kopel, 1963) considered interest to be "a pleasurable feeling that accompanies activity proceeding unhindered toward its goal (p.500)." Witty (1965) cited Hurlock's definition of interest. Hurlock said:

> An interest is a learned motive which drives the individual to act in accordance with that interest. It is defined as a preoccupation with an activity when the individual is free to choose. When the child finds an activity satisfying, it continues to be an interest (p.259).

Witty (1961), himself, defined interests:

> ...as a disposition or tendency which impels an individual to strive persistently for particular goals. And the behavior patterns displayed in seeking these goals may be regarded as interests. Once acquired, interests motivate behavior and may account for the effort exercised to attain particular ends (p.129).

Dewey(1913) saw that the root idea of the term "seems to be that of being engaged, engrossed, or entirely taken up with some activity because of its recognized worth (p.17)." In studies of reading interests, the most frequently quoted definition of interest is that of Getzels (1956) who defined an interest as "a characteristic disposition, organized through experience, which impels an individual to seek out particular objects, activities, understandings, skills or goals for attention or acquisition (p.7)."

Getzels differentiated clearly between the term, interest, and other terms which have been used as a synonym in various studies on reading interests. A preference, according to Getzels, is a willingness to receive one object as against another. A preference is passive while an interest is dynamic. While one can prefer one activity over another, a person need not have an interest in either. An attitude is "merely the readiness to react in a particular direction with respect to the given object (Getzels, 1956, p.7)." Again one need not have an interest in something about which one has an attitude. "A drive has its source in a specific physiological disequilibrium, and the individual seeks conditions that will reduce the drive or need

(Getzels, 1956, p.7)." A need, Getzels (1966) defined as "a disposition or force which impels (a person) consistently toward one type of activity as against another (p.98)." While the definitions of need and interest are similar, Getzels (1966) stated that the difference rests in that the drive "disposes an individual toward a general type of activity rather than toward a specific object or goal (p.98)." "A value is a conception of the desirable...an interest disposes us toward what we <u>want</u> to do, a value toward what we believe we <u>ought</u> to do (Getzels, 1966, p.98)."

The determinants of interests are many. According to Kopel (1963) they include "culture and class, intelligence and other aptitudes, social expectations, personality (needs and values), physical characteristics, and experience (p.499)." Super (Kopel, 1963) condensed Kopel's list to "an interdependent trio of aptitude, social expectations, and need or value (p.499)." Getzels (1956) identified seven different determinants. The first was what Getzels called constitutional givens, certain factors in a person's genetic structure carrying with them certain potentialities for directing a person toward one interest as against another. The second determinant was favored capacities, the differing abilities in varying areas of undertaking that we all have. Personality was cited as the third while sociocultural determinants were the fourth. Role requirements, the need to conform to the sex role assigned by one's society, was listed as the fifth determinant. Family influences were

seen as "the most important single factor in our development (Getzels, 1956, p.8)." The final determinant was accidental events, those things that "just happen" but still help to determine the outcome of one's life.

Originally interests were viewed as part of a combination of the homeostatic model of self-maintenance and the drive-or-tension-reduction theory of behavior (Getzels, 1966, p.99). According to this theory, a person's optimum state was thought to be one of rest and equilibrium. A person was said to act in such a way as always to return to the optimum state of rest and equilibrium. In terms of learning, the person placed in a state of disequilibrium (not knowing) was motivated to learn to reduce the tension. "In these terms an interest could also be conceived as a tension-producing state which impels the individual to action and stimulates him to behavior that reduces the tension raised by the interest (Getzels, 1966, p.99)."

Getzels noted that there has been growing discontent with the aforementioned theory of behavior as it applies to learning. It is now suggested that the human being is not only a stimulus-reducing organism but also a stimulus-seeking organism. "The optimum state of the human being may not be passivity but activity (Getzels, 1966, p.99)." Getzels (1966) referenced Hebb of McGill University who "directs our attention to such common human interests as mystery or adventure stories...all of which seem to provide pleasure by raising the level of tension and stimulation

rather than by reducing it (p.101)." If a person gets too little stimulation, boredom is the result.

In this interpretation of human behavior, interests are assigned a new role.

> Interests may be seen as serving a vital function beyond those usually attributed to them: They assure that the organism will seek or at least remain open to the continuous sensory input needed for optimum functioning over and above the input required by the primary bodily drives like hunger and thirst (Getzels, 1966, p.102).

Reviewed in this section were definitions of interest and the various determinants of interest as suggested by a number of authorities. Consideration was also given to the role of interests in a explanation of human behavior. Finally in a more recent analysis of human behavior the function of interest was explained.

II. THE ROLE OF INTEREST IN THE READING PROCESS

> The evidence is clear that we have taught the great percentage of our population how to read, but we have not developed a nation of readers (Strickland, 1957, p.137).

> Of every 100 children passing through our schools, only five will maintain regular reading habits; ninety-five will not (Ashley, 1972. p.1).

Although a quarter of a century separates the two writers, they mirror each other. Washburne (1972) commented that "we tell ourselves with much general agreement that our goal in reading teaching is not simple literacy but to create lifelong readers...(p.538)." Yet a number of writers express anxiety that only half of this goal is

being achieved. "There is a great danger that today in a period when great emphasis is being placed upon the need for reading skills, the real purpose of reading will be forgotten (Barbe, 1963, p.486)." Concern is also expressed by Jenkins (1969).

> The time has passed when we can discuss the place of reading in the school program or the value of a particular approach solely in terms of the number or complexity of words that the reader can perceive at any grade level, the age or the ease with which he can begin to read, or the rate at which he can comprehend. Unless the application of competencies to reading content leads to clearer insights and understandings, to keener social perceptiveness, to improved understandings of himself and others, to permanent interest in reading content with quality, we have failed regardless of the child's ability to apply phonetic understandings or to read 1500 words a minute (p.267).

The possibility of a concentration of effort on only half of the goal may be the result of a failure to consider children's reasons for learning to read. Namnum and Prelinger (Busch, 1970) pointed out that the motives for learning to read are conspicuously absent in most writings dealing with the teaching of reading. "For the most part, the concept that a child will be motivated to learn to read is usually taken for granted (Busch, 1970, p.24)." Busch, however, did cite two reasons why children learn to read. The first of these reasons relates to the child's relationship to adults. "Due to the social pressure adults put on the child to learn how to read, and the child's need to win approval from adults and to strongly identify with adult activities, the child will want to

learn to read (p.24)." The second factor relates to the child's need for mastering his surroundings. "The child faced with a new situation like reading, will, because of his particular developmental stage, want to master the unique task (Busch, 1970, p.25)." Busch added:

> If the child's motives for reading are viewed only as a reaction to external pressures or intrapsychic needs, while the motivational factors inherent in the reading process are ignored, then the process of learning to read can become an end in itself. ...thus if "learning to read" is presented to the child as an autonomous process that is unrelated to anything in particular, once this challenge is past, loss of interest should occur. That is, if by "learning to read" one has met the expectations of society and satisfied the need for mastery, the reading could become unimportant or irrelevant (p. 25).

It was noted by Theophane that most children reach a peak of reading activities in about the sixth grade. "Research activities further reveal that if children are not reading extensively by the time they are eleven, twelve or thirteen years of age, the chances of their ever becoming consistent readers are very slim indeed (Theophane, 1964, p.62)." Further, Jenkinson (1964) stated:

> We frequently test children to see if they know how to read, but we still more often assume - wrongly - that once a child has acquired the capacity to read he will spend his leisure time reading. We need also to ensure that he acquires the tendency to read (p.53).

Barbe (1963) charged that "until interest in reading is aroused...learning to read is little more than a mechanical, rote accumulation of isolated skills which actually have little relationship to reading (p.486)." Barbe added that

"only by developing permanent interests in reading along with the mastery of basic skills, can reading instruction be said to be successful (p.486)."

Jenkinson (1964) urged that "interest, one of the most potent motivating drives, should occupy a central place in the reading program (p.54)." "Nothing is more important in teaching reading than maintaining strong motivation (Bond & Tinker, 1967, p.448)." Busch (1970) contended that "content is of crucial significance in the process of learning to read, and that interest and relevance are significant content variables (p.24)." "If a book has little meaning for a child or does not gratify his curiosity or stimulate his thinking he will tend to lose interest (Jenkinson, 1964, p.54)." Jenkinson (1964) added that "it has long been a psychological truism that learning is most successful when the learner has a stake in the activity being undertaken (p.54)." Moir and Curtis (1968) claimed that "children become better readers by reading materials of vital interest to them (p.626)." "When moved by a high degree of interest, children show increased energy to work persistently at reading until satisfaction is gained from accomplishment (Howes, 1963, p.491)."

"By teaching the child to learn how to read with material of little interest or with a total emphasis on mechanics, it would seem that we are clearly delineating between work and play, school and non-school experiences (Busch, 1970, p.25)." Meisel and Glass remarked that "in

the teaching of reading, the concern for the interests of the students is significant in the development of long range attitudes toward learning in general and reading in specific (p.655)." Byers (1964) claimed that "basic attitudes toward reading begin to form in the early grades, and there would seem to be a definite relationship between the inherent interest in the materials read and the children's pleasure and satisfaction in the reading (p.228)."

> Reading materials with a high level of interest can certainly help to build favorable reading attitudes. A child's attitude toward reading is a vital influence upon his reading success both now and in the future. Through capitalizing on interests these attitudes can sometimes be changed or modified (Howes, 1963, p.495).

Robinson (1955) claimed that teachers from the primary grades through college generally recognized that a study of the reading interests of their students was one of the most important aspects of teaching reading. Further, Robinson said that "this is true because we know that children learn to read more rapidly if they are interested in the materials used (p.173)." Zimet (1972) though noted that "in an informal survey of college textbooks on reading instruction used by prospective elementary school teachers, none were found that described the content of ideas of reading texts or discussed the possible influence of the content on learning to read (p.129)."

Witty (1963) pointed out that "although many authorities in reading have recommended the use of interests in motivating instruction, relatively few studies of the

interest factor have been made during the past 20 years (p.10)." However, Meisel and Glass (1970) cited Barbe who said "there is ample research evidence, as well as the reports of classroom teachers to indicate that once interest is aroused, the learning to read process is greatly enhanced (p.655)." Barbe (1963) stated that when children are vitally interested in a topic, they are able to read material at a much higher level than they are when the topic is of little interest to them. Evidence for Barbe's statement is provided by research. Bernstein (1955) discovered that a group of seventh grade pupils reading two stories of equal readability, read the story which was more interesting with superior comprehension and increased speed. Groff (1962) found that the reading comprehension of an individual child as he reads is influenced to a degree by his attitude toward the content type of material being read. Shnayer (1969) working with sixth graders also established a relationship between the degree of interest in a passage and the degree of comprehension of the passage.

> Reading texts emphasize skill, and reading is taught for the sake of the skill itself. We need to shift our emphasis from "reading to learn to read" to "reading about something meaningful while learning to read" (Zimet, 1972, p.128).

As Barbe (1963) put it, "The child must know how to read to enjoy it, but there is no reason why the child cannot enjoy learning to read (p.487)." Horton (1956) commented:

> All major improvements in reading textbooks during the last thirty years have come from the practical search for ways and means of establishing and

> maintaining children's success and interest in reading. There can no longer be any doubt that interest is a valid and crucial criterion in making reading textbooks (p.116).

In summary, it would appear that reading teachers should have a twofold goal in their teaching. They are to impart the skills of reading and to produce readers who will willingly and voluntarily use these skills throughout their lifetime. A number of writers apparently believe that the two aspects of the goal have become dichotomous and that the teaching of reading skills has become paramount in importance. They caution that ignoring the interest factor of the content which is being used to develop the skills will produce readers who cease to be interested in reading after they have acquired the skills. By utilizing pupil's reading interests, reading teachers can achieve both aspects of their goal with the first half possibly being attained more quickly and with a higher degree of lasting success.

III. READING INTERESTS

Witty (1965, p.265) suggested that perhaps the first study of reading interests occurred in 1893 when M.B.C. True reported "What My Pupils Read". Since then more than 300 studies of reading interest have been carried out (Byers, 1964). The purpose of this section is not to summarize the findings concerning the reading interests of children. Rather it will examine some of the research which has been concerned with investigating variables which

may influence children's reading interests. The variables to be considered include the children's age and sex, their level of intelligence, reading ability and socioeconomic status including race and geographic location.

In their review of the literature dealing with research on reading interests, Purves and Beach (1972) concluded that the research definitely shows that "elementary school children's interests show a definite development by grade level (p.92)." Among the most influential studies concerning the relationship between reading interests and age was that of Terman and Lima (1925). They had more than 2,000 children keep a record of all the books they read for a two month period. As well the investigators obtained information from the children's parents and teachers. Terman and Lima (1925) concluded that "there are certain well-defined tendencies in reading interests that change as the child's experience grows and as his imagination and reasoning powers develop (p.31)."

Zimet (1966) noted that "one of the most highly significant factors in reading interest is the difference in boy-girl preferences. No other single determinant has received as much support and agreement in the literature (p.126)." As early as 1937, Lazar reported "marked sex differences in the books chosen for reading (Witty, 1965, p.266)." Using the responses of more than 74,000 children from grades three to twelve, Norvell (1958) concluded that from the fifth grade to adulthood, the sex of the child has

a dominating influence on his reading choices. Huus (1964) summarizing the findings of studies on reading interests stated that "few differences between the interests of boys and girls are apparent before age nine (but that) notable differences in the interests of boys and girls appear between ages ten and thirteen, especially at age twelve (p.125)." Purves and Beach (1972) remarked that "most studies find that sex is the most important determinant of differences in reading interests (p.93)."

Purves and Beach noted that the relationship between intelligence and reading interests has not been clearly established, but they did add that "much of the research... indicates that high and low intelligence students by and large have similar reading interests (p.95)." Wolfson (1960) studied the relationship between intelligence and reading interests of pupils in grades three to six and stated:

> The results of this study did not provide a sufficient basis for concluding that there is any relationship between the answers to the Reading Interest Inventory and the factors of reading achievement and intelligence test scores (p.82).

Thorndike and Henry (1940) looked at the reading interests of rapid-learning and slow-learning pupils in grades six to eight and concluded that "in a determination of the pattern of reported reading interests, sex is a vastly more important factor than even the large difference in intelligence level characterizing these groups (p.762)."

Examining the literature on the relationship between

reading interests and reading ability, Purves and Beach (1972) stated that "most of the research indicates that - while reading ability does relate to sophistication of interests, it does not directly correlate with interests (p.97)." Tinker and Bond (1967, p.449) cited the work of Stanchfield who classified 153 boys in grades four, six and eight with I.Q.'s ranging from 90 to 120 into groups of superior, average and poor readers and found similar reading interests among the different reading ability groups. Geeslin and Wilson (1972) investigated whether or not an eight-year-old reading at a grade five level would prefer the favored books of fifth grade pupils or those of his age peers. They also looked at whether or not a twelve-year-old who was reading at a fifth grade level would prefer the materials of his reading peers or his age peers. They found that the pupils in classrooms with chronological age mates made more choices of books preferred by chronological age mates.

Feely (1972) studied the reading interests of boys and girls in grades four and five in terms of sex, race and socioeconomic status and concluded that sex continues to be a major determinant of middle-grade children's interests. Schulte (1969) dealing with the interests of children in grades four, five and six, found the independent reading interests highest for children in rural areas and lowest for children in suburban areas. Carsley (1957) found that "reading preferences (of 10 and 11 year-olds) based on

stated likings for classes of books showed that there were more differences between boys and girls than between groups of children from dissimilar social areas (p.13)."

> Most of the research concludes that socioeconomic factors do not significantly affect interests, that lower, middle, and upper class students have relatively similar interests...(Purves & Beach, 1972, p.104).

In summary, while intelligence, reading ability and socioeconomic factors do influence reading interests to an extent, the evidence of research definitely indicates that the primary determinants of reading interests are sex and age.

IV. INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES USED TO COLLECT DATA ON READING INTERESTS

A researcher about to investigate the reading interests of children is offered numerous methodologies from which to choose. This section will examine some of the various techniques, their advantages and disadvantages.

In a comprehensive review of the literature and research on reading interests, McKay (1968) listed the methods that have been used. Historically, reading interests have been identified by:

> 1. Keeping lists of selections used by students to show trends and changes in interests and tastes.
> 2. Questioning students and adults about their own reading at certain ages.
> 3. Observing students and performing experimental research with them.
> 4. Recording withdrawals from libraries or soliciting opinions from librarians (p.108).

McKay recorded that some of the more recent

techniques include checklists and rating lists of stories and books, personal interviews, interest inventories, anecdotal or diary records, case studies and annotated fictitious titles.

Martin (1972) cited Jordan who claimed that "there are two major methods of discovering reading interests of children. One method is by carefully studying the withdrawal of books from the library. Another method is by questioning pupils directly as to their likes and dislikes (p.18)."

A record of the withdrawal of books from the library can be maintained through the circulation records or by having the students or teachers keep a reading record. Purves and Beach (1972) put forth as an advantage of the method of studying withdrawals of books the statement that "this method does provide information about actual reading (p.65)," however, Brown (1971) fears that "the results more likely reflect the children's interest in what was available rather than their broad reading interest assessed by means of categories of literature (p.6)." McKay (1968, p.111) cautioned that since adults do most of the selecting of materials which are present in school libraries, there may have been a prejudgement made as to what children's reading interests are or should be. Weintraub (1969) added as a limitation to this technique the factors of "the availability of materials in a given library and the freedom with which children are permitted to browse through books (p.657)." "Libraries may not have additional copies of popular books,

reducing their availability (Purves & Beach, 1972, p.65)." Selection and real liking of a book, Weintraub added, may not be identical. The inability of the researcher to determine why the books were being borrowed was seen as a shortcoming by Martin (1972, p.18). There are a multitude of reasons why a child may borrow a book and not all of them are rooted in interest. "The most serious drawback is that the books may never be read (Purves & Beach, 1972, p.65)."

One procedure cited by Brown (1971), which is used in having the students keep a reading record of what they have read, is to have them "cast a ballot" for each book as they finish reading it. The children are asked to fill out a ballot on every book read, to give the title and author, and to check one of four ratings on how well liked the books were. The advantage, claimed by Brown, is that children are referring to specific books and not to topics. Again, the researcher has no idea as to what books were available when the choice was made, nor does he know whether or not children are completing ballots in order to please teachers or to impress other children. Purves and Beach (1972) feared that "often the reading is not reported fully (p.65)."

Jordan (Martin, 1972, p.18) explained that direct questioning of pupils as to their likes and dislikes may take the form of an oral interview or a written questionnaire. Purves and Beach saw some of the liabilities of the methodology of library withdrawals being offset by requesting further information from the borrower when he returned the

book. A "problem with the interview technique is that the subjects may not provide accurate information (Purves and Beach, 1972, p.63)." Martin (1972) identified some of the causes of this misinformation. The pupil may refuse to cooperate due to his personal dislike for the interviewer or his inability to communicate with adult strangers, or his inability to communicate orally with adults on an individual basis. Byers (1964) questioned the validity of the interview method by citing Young and Shores who have found that the use of interviews to ascertain basic interests yielded different interests from those revealed by observation records. Young and Shores concluded that children are aware of our cultural expectations for their age level and sex and they may state interests which they think are approved. In addition, "the interview is time-consuming and requires highly trained investigators (Purves and Beach, 1972, p.63)."

Another form of direct questioning of the pupil is by means of a questionnaire. "An obvious advantage of the questionnaire is that the investigator may direct questions toward particular areas which interest him (Purves & Beach, 1972, p.63)." "The interest questionnaire calls for brief answers to specific questions such as 'Which book that you have read this year did you like best?' (Strang, 1963, p. 465)" or "Write down the five best books you have ever read (Brown, 1971, p.20)." Obviously such questions can require considerable memory on the part of the children. McKay

(1968) noted that in recalling titles, people tend to remember the unique, not the common. "A study of interests which is based on past reading experience may produce results that are based as much on what children have been able to read as on what they have wanted to read (Thorndike & Henry, 1940, p.751)." Considering the use of questionnaires, King (1967) concluded:

> Studies based on questionnaires are apt to be biased. Since there is prestige attached to reading books, and since teacher and parental pressure to read is frequently a factor, pupils who read are proud of the fact and are glad to report it. Pupils who do not read books are generally not proud of it and they will not talk about books, or they will exaggerate the number read. Moreover, there is the problem of what constitutes having "read a book". For these reasons, results from questionnaires tend to be biased toward pupils who are interested in books. (pp.322-323).

Despite the criticisms of the use of the questionnaire to ascertain reading interests, Purves and Beach (1972) observed that since 1900 the "questionnaire was used two to one over rating lists and two and one-half to one over observation (p.62)."

A particular form of the questionnaire is the checklist. It enumerates areas of interest, types of books or titles of books. Pupils are asked to respond to every item usually by putting a check under "like", "indifferent", or "dislike". Strang (1963) enumerated certain advantages of the checklist. It is easy to tabulate, and it can be used to present a large number of interests. Also, it requires no writing ability. It is, however, difficult to

interpret. As Townsend (1960) stated, "One is never quite sure what the checks mean... the general categories such as 'adventure' or 'humor' give no information on interests in the many different varieties of adventure and humor (p.298)." And Brown (1971) added that "this type of inventory can perhaps give a broad indication of children's reading interests, but it is questionable whether children can themselves categorize the type of book liked with any degree of accuracy (p.20)." It is possible that what one person may classify as a travel story, another may categorize as an adventure story. Strang (1963) was also concerned that "suggestible persons may say they 'like" items in which they have only the slightest interest" while "the response of conscientious or insecure pupils may be governed by a desire to say what will be approved either by their peers or by the teacher (p.465)." "Moreover, subjects may rate books which they have not read (Purves & Beach, 1972, p.64)."

Another modification of the questionnaire technique was devised by Thorndike (1941) who developed a fictitious-titles checklist or questionnaire. Fictitious book titles and short annotations describing the content of the book were created for the types of reading under investigation. This technique minimizes factors of actual reading experience by presenting the same set of stimuli to all subjects. The limitations of the technique, as seen by Purves and Beach (1972) are that "the types of categories represented may not be clearly distinguished by either the investigator or the

subject (p.64)" and that "the subjects may also misinterpret the type due to connotations or identification of the title with actual titles (p.64)." Thorndike, himself, believed that the chief limitation of the method lay in the fact that it is based on the purely verbal response of the pupil, not upon actual behavior. "There is a gap between what the individual says he would like to do and what he will actually do (Thorndike, 1941, p.6)." However two months following their experiment Thorndike and Henry (1940) had 173 of the 208 children who participated in the experiment give them a list of what they had read since the experiment. Thorndike and Henry found that "in general, the fiction read corresponded fairly closely with the types of fiction titles chosen on the questionnaire (p.762)."

Commenting on the merits of the various methodologies used in identifying children's reading interests, Purves and Beach (1972) concluded:

> Of methodologies for determining reading interest, then, we may say that observation of books read is the most accurate and the most difficult to manipulate save in controlled settings. Of the measures which ask for the subject's recall, some form of checklist or questionnaire is better than an open-response question.... A questionnaire which used some checklist (actual or fictitious titles or descriptions) is probably the best, even though it risks suggesting to the respondent what sorts of things the researcher would like him to read (p.68).

V. BASAL READERS AND INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS RESEARCH

While there have been in excess of 200 studies relating specifically to basal readers (Stadger, 1968, p.6) and up to 1960 approximately 300 studies of reading interests (Byers, 1964, p.227), Feimer and Kraetzer (1972, p.363) noted that studies of the content of school readers have been rare. This section will examine, in chronological order, studies dealing with the content of basal readers, and the relationship between the basal content and the reading interests of children.

Smith (1962) set as the purpose of her investigation the determination of how nearly the interest categories found in basic preprimers and primers designed as a introduction to reading for first grade children matched the reading interests of these children as evidenced by their "free-choice" selection of reading material from the library. A list of 23 categories of reading interest was prepared in consultation with a children's librarian. The library selections made during 14 library visits by 110 grade one pupils from three schools were recorded, and on the basis of content, the books were assigned to one of the 23 categories. Smith read the content of 37 preprimers and 12 primers and, on the basis of content, each of the stories was assigned to one of the interest categories. The interest categories found in the preprimers and primers were then compared with

the categories of interest found in the books which the children selected at the libraries.

Smith found that the preprimers and primers showed a narrower span of reading interests than the children's choices since eight of the 23 interest categories were not found in the content of the selected readers. Smith (1962) concluded that:

> The data seems to indicate that generally the preprimers and primers which the children are required to read and which are supposed to stimulate an interest and desire to read, do not really satisfy their reading interests as shown by their 'free choice' of books at the library (p.209).

Byers (1962) tape recorded the voluntary sharing period in first grade classrooms in 34 communities in 14 states. The sharing period was a time when the children could talk about happenings of interest to them or could bring objects to talk about and share with the other children. In total she recorded the contributions of 1,860 children in 214 sharing periods. Since the topics the children talked about did not fit under the commonly used interest categories, Byers developed her own. Although Byers did not analyze any basal readers, she did draw implications for the content of basal readers from the interests the children demonstrated during their sharing periods. It was her conclusion that the differences she found in the interests of boys and girls suggested that "the current content of basal readers may more often be geared to the major interests of girls than of boys (Byers, 1964, p.232)."

The interests of 13-year-old, educable mentally retarded students who had a mean reading level of 3-6 were examined by Koelsch (1969) who compared their interests with the content of five basal reading series on the 3-1 level. He found a statistically significant deviation in interest categories among the reading series and a low correlation between the interests of the basal readers and the interests of the educable mentally retarded pupils.

A research group located at the University of Colorado Medical Center in Denver, Colorado has been systematically investigating the substantive motivational and attitudinal content of first grade reading textbooks for the past six years. Wiberg and Trost (1970), who were part of that research group, compared the primer content with which the child is forced to deal in learning to read and the content of the students' free choice library selections. The national sample of primers was composed of 1,307 stories in 12 of the most commonly used publishers' series. The library sample consisted of 639 books from the library of a middle to upper class suburban elementary school. The 45 first grade students (23 boys and 22 girls) who went to the school library twice a week to borrow books were limited to the 639 books designated by the teachers and the librarian as being for the use of first grade pupils. For one academic year, a record was maintained of each child's book borrowing. Six content dimensions were used to analyze the contents of the basal readers and the library books borrowed. These

categories included characters, theme, age of activity, sex of activity, outcome of activity and environmental setting. Wiberg and Trost (1970) concluded that "the study of free choice library selections of first grade children shows a rather marked disparity between the story content of primers and what is made available and preferred in an elementary school library (p.297)."

Meisel and Glass (1970) also compared children's voluntary reading interests with their required reading. For a five month period, a record was kept of all the books withdrawn from a 4,000 volume school library by an unspecified number of fifth grade pupils. Using a slightly modified form of the categories found in Strang's List of Readable Books, a list of 42 separate interest areas was developed. The books borrowed from the library and the contents of the fifth grade basal reader, New Days and Deeds, published by Scott, Foresman in 1956, were categorized according to the 42 interest areas. Meisel and Glass (1970) found that "in most cases, the reported high percentage of students indicating a preference for a particular interest area in voluntary reading choices did not match with the percentage of times that an interest area appeared in the basal text (p.657)." In addition, Meisel and Glass noted that many of the interest areas, for which the children indicated a preference, were not included in the basal reader. Of the children's ten most popular interest areas, only four were found in the basal. As well two of the six

interest areas the reader did include were not among the children's list of favorite interest areas. Meisel and Glass (1970) concluded that "the results of this study tend to support the hypothesis that the type of story found in the basal reader is generally not the type of story that children voluntarily choose to read themselves (p.659)."

More recently Martin (1972) set out to determine the reading interests of sixth grade children and to determine how nearly the content of 5 sixth grade basic readers matched the reading interests of sixth grade pupils. The methodology he used to identify the children's reading interests was by means of a fictitious annotated titles questionnaire of the type first developed by Thorndike (1941). Martin's questionnaire investigated 25 categories of reading interests of which 12 were classified as fiction and 13 as nonfiction. The final form of the questionnaire containing 90 titles and annotations was administered to one sixth grade class selected from each of nine schools. In total, 225 sixth grade pupils (125 boys and 130 girls) completed the questionnaire. The content of five basic readers, the Scott, Foresman's Open Highways; Holt, Rinehart and Winston's Sounds of a Distant Drum; Harper and Row's From Coins to Kings and Seven Seas; and Macmillan's Into New Worlds were analyzed in terms of the 25 categories. Martin (1972, p.334) found that boys indicated a greater interest in all five basic readers than girls. A majority of the girls indicated rather low to moderate interest in the five

readers.

As Feimer and Kretzer (1972) pointed out, despite teachers' criticism of basal reader content, there have been few studies that have examined the content of these readers. This section, in a chronological fashion, has considered some of the studies. The majority of the studies dealt with the content of the preprimers and primers. Only recently has attention been turned to the basal readers in use in the intermediate grades. Although a number of different methods were used to arrive at children's voluntary reading interests and different interest categories were applied, researchers arrived at similar conclusions. To varying degrees, they agreed that the content which children are forced to read in basal readers is generally not that which children would choose to read voluntarily.

VI. SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed recent theories concerning the psychological basis of interest. Currently it would appear that the human organism is viewed as a tension-seeking being as well as a tension-reducing one. Interests are seen as a channel for the continuous sensory input needed for a being's optimum functioning level.

While imparting reading skills and producing life-long readers are the twin goals of reading instruction, professional opinion expressed concern that only the former goal was being actively sought in reading instruction, with

the role of interest in the reading process relatively neglected. The use of interests in reading instruction was shown to be beneficial in terms of gains attained in reading skills and in the alteration of attitudes toward reading.

Various variables have been researched to determine which have significant influence on children's reading interests. This chapter considered the research dealing with children's reading interests and their age, sex, intelligence level, reading ability and socioeconomic status. Research evidence indicated that the primary determinants of reading interests at the intermediate grade level are sex and age.

Because the study called for the investigator to design an instrument to measure reading interests, the critical literature dealing with methodologies for ascertaining reading interests was reviewed. Library withdrawals, interviews, questionnaires, and checklists were considered as to their advantages and disadvantages as methods for identifying the reading interests of children. The review of the methodologies indicated that a questionnaire of the type used by Thorndike was probably the best method for obtaining information about children's interests.

Finally this chapter reviewed the available research dealing with the relationship between children's independent reading interests and the content of basal readers. The majority of the studies dealt with the primary grades. Attention has only recently been directed to the intermediate

grades. At both the primary and intermediate levels though, the researchers found that the content of basal readers was not of a nature that children would seek to read voluntarily.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTATION, RESEARCH PROCEDURES, AND ANALYSIS OF THE INSTRUMENT

This chapter deals with the first two phases of the study: (1) the design and construction of an instrument to identify fifth grade pupils' independent reading interests and (2) the administration of this instrument. As part of the design of the instrument, a rationale for developing a new instrument is provided. Then the basis for the instrument, a fictitious annotated titles questionnaire, is set forth. The procedures used to construct the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire are explained, including the methodologies for identifying the fiction categories, constructing the descriptive annotations and establishing the readability of the instrument. Following are descriptions of the validity studies. Within the framework of the research procedures, the pilot study is described. As well the population from which the sample was drawn to complete the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire is discussed. Explanations as to how the data on reading interests were collected and treated are provided. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the instrument used to identify the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils.

I. INSTRUMENTATION

Design of the Instrument

Rationale for the Development of a New Instrument to Investigate Reading Interests. Although Byers (1964) noted that by 1960 more than 300 studies of reading interests had been completed, this investigator decided to measure the reading interests of fifth grade students again rather than arrive at a consensus of their interests based on the existing research. The decision to carry out an original identification of reading interests was based on two statements in the literature. Steiert (1966) asserted that "reading interests are dynamic, and continuous consideration must be given to them to keep them to the forefront in the education of the pupil, as well as up-to-date, reflecting contemporary influences (p.24)." Therefore, while the results of earlier studies might have been valid for their time, contemporary influences such as television may have altered children's reading interests. As well Zimet (1966) pointed out:

> The differences in the findings (of children's reading interests) point up a major difficulty of the research in this area. Each study used a different type of population, sample and different methods of assessing children's interests, with the result that it is almost impossible to compare results (p.124).

It would appear then that even had the investigator desired to obtain a consensus of fifth graders' interests, the task would have been difficult if not impossible.

The Fictitious Annotated Titles Questionnaire. The review of the literature on instruments and procedures used to collect data on reading interests found in Chapter II concluded with a direct quotation from a critical review of reading interest research. Purves and Beach (1972) stated that next to the actual observation of books read, a questionnaire using fictitious titles or descriptions is probably the best method for determining reading interests.

Robert L. Thorndike (1941) developed the technique of asking children to respond to titled descriptions of fictitious books or stories. Thorndike called the instrument upon which this methodology is based a fictitious annotated titles questionnaire. This form of instrument was viewed by Thorndike as being a practical compromise between the somewhat conflicting goals "of (1) getting genuine interest reactions (2) quickly and conveniently (3) in a form which guarantees that each child is faced with the same array of choices and (4) in a form which does not place a heavy premium upon fluency of reading (Thorndike, 1941, p. iii)."

Thorndike saw the briefest indication of the character of a book as being contained in its title, but recognized that some titles are quite indicative of the character of a book while others seem more designed to conceal than to reveal the books' contents. Thorndike (1941) concluded:

> Titles by themselves then, provide a picture of a book which is likely to be too vague and incomplete,

> too variable from one person to the next, to provide the basis for meaningful and comparable judgements of interest or lack of interest in the topic treated(p.4).

To clarify the titles' intent, Thorndike (1941) added to each title an annotation noting that the annotation could be "of any desired length (p.5)." In developing the annotated titles, Thorndike used fictitious items as the purpose of his investigation was to explore topics of interest, rather than to determine interest in any specific books.

A number of advantages accrue from the use of the fictitious annotated titles questionnaire as a medium for the study of reading interests. Among them are:

> (1) Reactions are obtained from each individual to the same array of objective stimuli.
> (2) No individual has had specific experience with the stimuli before the experiment.
> (3) Reading difficulty is reduced to a low level and (it is hoped) largely equated for different titles.
> (4) Reaction to a wide array of stimuli may be obtained in quite a short time. The method is convenient and practical (Thorndike, 1941, p.5).

Asking children to demonstrate their reading interests through reading a descriptive annotation is consistent with the process that children report they use in selecting reading materials. When children were asked what factors influenced them in choosing a book, a number of investigators (Carsley, 1957; Furness, 1963; Packer, 1968) found that a majority of the pupils made their choice by reading some of the book first to sample it or by reading a descriptive note about the book's subject.

Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. While the basic feature

of Thorndike's fictitious annotated titles questionnaire, that of fictitious titles being used to represent categories of literature, was to be maintained in the instrument used in this study, certain modifications were made in Thorndike's approach. The first change was to delete the titles used to introduce each annotation. Thorndike, himself, recognized that titles provided a poor basis for making judgements about the content of a book. Further Droney, Cucchiara, and Scipione (1953) found in examining pupils' preferences for titles and stories in basal readers that boys would reject titles of stories which included a feminine character although the reverse was not true for girls. Both sexes, however, rejected titles which contained meaningless, strange or unknown foreign words. Since it was possible that students would respond on the basis of the title alone without reading the annotation to discover the book's contents, and consequently might misjudge the type of book that was represented by the title and annotation, it was decided to reject the use of titles as part of the instrument.

Another departure from Thorndike's fictitious annotated titles questionnaire was the decision to standardize the length of the annotations. Thorndike's original instrument contained 88 annotations whose length ranged from a low of 10 words to a high of 41 words in length. It was felt that the large annotations were more likely to interest the child because of the extra information provided or because of their seeming importance. Conversely, the

child could become disinterested because of length. To control for responses being unduly influenced by annotation length it was decided to limit the descriptive annotations in the present study to 40 words plus or minus five words.

A further major difference between Thorndike's instrument and the instrument used in this study centred around the scope of the instruments. Thorndike examined both the fiction and nonfiction interests of children. Thorndike's instrument measured 14 categories of fiction and 10 categories of nonfiction. Since evidence of a number of researchers (Howes, 1963; Witty, 1963; Schulte, 1969; Stevenson, 1969; Ashley, 1972) indicated that fiction is favored over nonfiction by intermediate grade children when they are seeking recreational reading, it was decided to restrict this study to an examination of fiction. Therefore the instrument in the present study identifies only children's interests in the area of fiction.

Another dissimilarity between Thorndike's study and the present study involving the use of "ringer" annotations will be discussed in this chapter under Validity Studies.

To differentiate the instrument used in this study from the type used by others who have followed Thorndike's approach closely, the instrument was called an Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire.

Identification of Fiction Categories. The construction of the instrument began with the identification of the categories into which children's fiction could be divided.

Various investigators using Thorndike's methodology had measured fiction interests by using differing numbers of fiction categories. Thorndike (1941) had 14 fiction categories while Steiert (1966) and Cooper (Steiert, 1966) both had 10. Schulte (1969) had only 9 categories while Martin (1972) used 12. In none of the studies did the researchers define what they meant by the various fiction categories. Consequently, each reader of these studies likely brings his own interpretation to each of the categories. The lack of clear definitions for the categories of literature used in reading interest research is seen as a weakness by Purves and Beach (1972, p.62).

Using as a guide the categories from the fictitious annotated titles questionnaires developed by the aforementioned researchers and the categories found in various checklists, the investigator returned to the writing on children's literature. An attempt was made to ascertain how authorities in the field of children's literature categorized children's fiction. While a comprehensive review of the literature was carried out, particular attention was paid to the writings of Arbuthnot (1964, 1969); Arbuthnot and Sutherland (1972); Georgiou (1969); Huck and Kuhn (1968); Ray (1972); J. Smith (1967); and L. Smith (1953).

At the conclusion of this literature review, the investigator drew up a list of 17 fiction categories. For each category a definition was developed. The investigator saw the definitions fulfilling five major functions. These

were:

(1) To serve as a guide to the investigator in writing the annotations which would make up the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire.

(2) To serve as a guide to the investigator in categorizing the fiction content of the basal readers.

(3) To serve as a guide to classroom teachers attempting to categorize the fiction content of readers.

(4) To serve as an aid to readers of this study in more fully understanding the distinctions among the various fiction categories used in the study.

(5) To serve as a guide to other researchers so that they might use the same categories in the same manner and thus facilitate comparisons between studies.

Following the establishment of the 17 categories and their definitions, they were sent to a panel of judges. Modifications were made based on the panel's advice. This segment of the instrument's construction is more fully discussed in this chapter in the section Validity Studies. The amended list of fiction categories and definitions numbered 18. The categories were: Adventure Story; Animal Story (Realistic Observation); Animal Story (Talking but True to Species); Biographical Fiction; Car Story; Family Story; Fantasy; Folktales; Hero Tales; Historical Fiction; Mysteries; Myths; Regional Fiction; Romance; Science Fiction; Sports Fiction; Tall Tales; and Vocational Story. Appendix A contains the 18 fiction categories and their definitions.

Descriptive Annotations. The next phase of the instrument construction involved the writing of the descriptive annotations. Two annotations were written for each fiction category. The two annotations for each category were necessary so that the reliability of the instrument could be ascertained. While it was possible to have used only one annotation to represent each category and then to have used the test-retest method for estimating reliability, the investigator was uncertain as to the manner in which students would react to the annotations. If the pupils regarded the annotations as being similar to a book, they might not react to a second exposure to the annotations with the same degree of attention that they did on the first reading. Having been read before, the annotations might lose their freshness and novelty in the same manner that a reread novel can. Because of the uncertainties involved in the test-retest method of estimating reliability, it was decided to use the parallel-forms method. "Parallel or equivalent forms of a test may be administered to the same group of subjects, and the paired observations correlated (Ferguson, 1971, p.366)." As the responses to the instrument yielded nominal rather than interval scores, to determine the degree of association between the responses of each pair of annotations representing a single fiction category, a chi-square was used. The reliability of the instrument is discussed further in section III of this chapter, EVALUATION OF THE INSTRUMENT.

In an attempt to produce parallel annotations, the investigator endeavored to hold constant within each set of annotations the number, sex and age of the characters, the setting, plot situation and theme. While the annotations were fundamentally alike, attributes of the annotation such as personal and place names, and specific incidents were allowed to be different so as to present to children two stimuli which were basically alike yet enough different to be perceived by the child as being two unique offerings. Annotations were made as uniformly intriguing and descriptive as possible. Using as the criteria of parallelism the number of characters, sex and age of the characters, setting, plot structure and theme, one of the panel of judges critically examined the paired sets of annotations. Modifications were made in the annotations until they were judged to be equal.

The annotations produced were fictitious. Some were based on actual books, but the descriptions were altered so as to make the book unrecognizable. Fictitious annotations were used in order to avoid the situation in which part of the sample is reacting on the basis of actual experience with a book with all of the factors of style, difficulty and format involved while the rest of the sample is reacting merely to the information contained in the annotation. As a resource for annotation ideas, the investigator examined the annotations appropriate to fifth grade students contained in Books for Children from 1960 to

1971. Books for Children volumes contain the annual compilation of reviews of children's books found in Booklist, a reputable book selection aid published twice a month by the American Library Association. After the descriptive annotations were written, the readability level of the instrument was considered.

Readability. In his study, Thorndike (1941) recognized that a problem might occur with the child's having difficulty in reading and comprehending the titles and annotations. Simplifying the vocabulary was seen by Thorndike as a way of minimizing, while not completely obviating this difficulty. Other researchers (Schulte, 1969; Brown, 1971; Martin, 1972) who used an instrument of the type devised by Thorndike did not control the vocabulary in the annotations. Recognizing that children have differences in reading abilities, the researchers, instead of having the children read the instruments, had the descriptive annotations read aloud by the teacher. While this procedure eliminated the problem of the reading difficulty level, it introduced some new difficulties. Students could not have second thoughts about an annotation and express this reflection by a change of response. Although the oral reading of the annotations removed the readability difficulty for the children, it substituted the problem of the children's varying listening abilities. A further criticism of the oral reading approach would be that it is a step removed from the manner

in which children state they choose books. As was reported earlier in this section, children claim to select their free choice reading materials by sampling the content of the material or by reading a description about the book.

Since most readability formulas sample passages of 50 words from the total text (Klare, 1963) and since no annotation in the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire was to exceed 45 words, the correct application of readability formulas to ascertain the readability level of the instrument was impossible. Klare suggested that to write readably, the writer should select words in terms of their high frequency of occurrence and consequent familiarity to students. "The important thing is to keep the proportion of such words as high as the reader's and the writer's purposes demand (Klare, 1963, p.18)." Since Bond and Tinker (1967) asserted that "in the fifth grade...it is quite normal to find a six-or-seven-year difference between the least and the most competent reader (p.45)," the investigator, in writing the annotations, made a special effort to keep the vocabulary used in the instrument both easy and specific so that the students could complete the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire independently and with ease while concentrating on the content.

As Klare had suggested that an indication of the reading difficulty of a passage could be derived through the use of vocabulary counts, all of the words in the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire, with the exception of

proper nouns, were compared with the Thorndike and Lorge book, The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words, published in 1944. The list identifies how common a word is and states at what point in schooling a word should have become a permanent part of a child's stock of word knowledge. Because the Thorndike and Lorge list was published almost three decades ago, a small number of the words used in the instrument were of too recent an origin to be included in the list. Whenever this situation occurred, the word was identified in the more recent word list edited by Carrol, David and Rickman (1971) entitled Word Frequency Book.

If a word was found to be rated by the Thorndike-Lorge list at the fifth grade level or higher, the investigator tried to find a synonym which would maintain the meaning desired in the annotation but which would be rated at a lower grade level. Table I provides the Thorndike-Lorge rating of the 498 different words, excluding proper nouns, which were found in the final form of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. The majority of the words in the instrument should have become a part of the permanent word knowledge of the children by the end of the second grade. This group of words, numbering 322, accounted for 64.68 percent of the total number of words used in the instrument. Seventy-eight or 15.64 percent of the words were of third grade difficulty while 61 or 12.25 percent of the total number of words were at the fourth grade level. A child of third grade reading level should have had no difficulty

TABLE I

THORNDIKE-LORGE RATING OF THE 498 DIFFERENT WORDS CONTAINED IN THE A.N.-T.Q.

Grade Level	No. of Words	% of Total No. of Words	Cumulative Word Total	Cumulative % Total
1 and 2	322	64.68	322	64.68
3	78	15.64	400	80.32
4	61	12.25	461	92.57
5 and 6	15	3.01	476	95.58
7 and 8	7	1.41	483	96.99
9 thru 12	15	3.01	498	100.00

with 80.32 percent of the instrument's words, while a child of fourth grade reading ability should have experienced no problem with 92.57 percent of the words in the instrument. In another manner of looking at the reading difficulty of the instrument, a student of third grade reading level might be expected to have difficulty with an average of 2.7 words per annotation while a student of fourth grade reading level might experience reading difficulty with an average of one word per annotation. Thirty-seven words or 7.43 percent of the total words were at the fifth grade level or higher. No acceptable synonym could be found for the 37 words that would have rendered the same meaning in the passages while being of a lower reading level. In most cases, contextual clues would assist the student in achieving the meaning of these unknown words. In addition students were instructed to raise their hands if they needed assistance with any of the words.

After the descriptive annotations were written, they were sent to a panel of judges for purposes of establishing the validity of the instrument. This phase of the study is discussed at further length in this chapter as part of Validity Studies.

Format of the Instrument. In ordering the annotations in the instrument, it was believed highly desirable to avoid juxtaposing annotations representing the same fiction category. Because of the content similarity of the pairs of annotations, it was thought possible that a respondent

might choose one annotation from a pair and reject the next because of the high degree of likeness. If, however, the two annotations of the same category were separated by a number of annotations from different categories, there would be less likelihood of the respondents remembering the similarity and more chance that they would be responding to the annotations as distinctly separate entities.

To establish the order of the annotations in the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire, the numbers from 1 to 18 were randomly assigned to the eighteen categories of fiction. The numbers from 19 to 27 were randomly given to each of the categories which had formerly received the numbers from 1 to 9. In the same fashion the numbers 28 to 36 were randomly attached to those categories bearing the numbers 10 to 18. The two numbers assigned to a category, one between 1 and 9 and the other between 19 and 27, or the first between 10 and 18 and the second between 28 and 36 represented the numerical position that the two descriptive annotations would hold in the instrument. This arrangement assured that at least 10 and no more than 17 annotations would separate the two annotations representing the same category. Keys to the instrument are to be found in Appendix B.

The total instrument consisted of four sheets of paper stapled in booklet form and printed on both sides. The use of both sides of the paper was done to reduce the thickness of the instrument and to create a psychological

feeling in the student that the instrument was not too lengthy. The first of the eight unnumbered pages consisted of directions and examples needed by the students in completing the instrument. The remaining seven pages contained the 36 descriptive annotations. An example of a descriptive annotation is given in Figure 1. Students were instructed to circle YES if they wished to read the story or one like it and NO if they did not wish to. Uncertainty could be indicated by circling ?.

19. Hing Lon lives with his large family on a fishing junk in Hong Kong. He longs to go to school, but there is only enough money to send his sister, Lee. Together, they build kites to sell in the market for extra money for Hing. YES NO ?

FIGURE 1

SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE ANNOTATION

In its final form the descriptive annotations in the instrument contained a total of 1493 words. The first half of the annotations had 747 words while the last 18 comprised 746 words. The average length of an annotation was 41.5 words. Each annotation consisted of an average of three sentences, each sentence being approximately 13.8 words in length. The final form of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire is found in Appendix C.

Validity Studies

In their review of the literature on methodologies used in identifying reading interests, Purves and Beach (1972) commented that "if we are to pursue the topic of reading interests, then the construction and validation of a questionnaire format is an important first step (p.68)." A specific criticism leveled at the Thorndike fictitious-titles checklist by Purves and Beach was that "the types or categories (of literature) represented may not be clearly distinguished by either the investigator or the subject (p.64)."

A testing instrument may be said to possess validity if it measures what the investigator intended it to measure. Two forms of validity are pertinent to the present study.

Content Validity. Content validity refers to the degree to which an instrument samples a given variable or situation. Content validity played a dual role in the instrument. Firstly there was the question of the comprehensiveness of the fiction categories, and then there was the concern as to whether the annotations actually represented the categories of fiction they were intended to represent. With regard to the first role, Purves and Beach stated that "another bias of many studies of content is that the researchers never quite freed themselves from notions of what students' interests 'should be'. Thus certain subject matter...has been totally ignored (p.69)."

Following a review of the literature on children's fiction and an examination of the categories of fiction used in other instruments, a list of 17 fiction categories with definitions were drawn up. To ascertain whether or not these 17 categories totalled the universe of children's fiction, they were submitted to a panel of three experts. The panel of judges, all located in the City of Edmonton, consisted of a university instructor of courses in children's literature, a school library supervisor involved in the evaluation of children's literature, and the former head of the children's department of a large metropolitan public library. The judges were asked to adjudicate the adequacy of (a) the categorization and (b) the definitions. If the judges believed there were omissions of categories or inaccuracies in the definitions, they were invited to make additions and deletions. On the basis of their comments several changes were made in the categories. One category, Fables, from the original list of 17 was merged with another category, Folktales. Two other categories, the Car Story and Romance, were added. Two further suggestions for an additional category, each made by a different member of the panel, were rejected. The suggestions were for categories entitled School Stories and Humor. The former, it was agreed by the panel, was a variant form of the Family Story while the latter suggested category was seen to be not a category but a quality of writing which can be a part of any category. The revised list of 18 categories with

definitions were resubmitted to the panel who agreed that the categories represented in their view the universe of children's fiction.

As mentioned, the second phase of establishing the content validity of the instrument dealt with the annotations. In order to be able to interpret a response to a particular annotation as representing some position of interest in a category of fiction, it was necessary to ascertain that each of the annotations did, in fact, represent a distinct category of fiction. A set of 18 annotations in random order were sent to each of the aforementioned judges who were asked to categorize them according to the 18 established categories of fiction. Upon completion of the first set of annotations, the same procedure was followed for a second set. All three judges agreed completely in their cateorization of the annotations. In turn, the judges' categorizations were in agreement with the fiction category established by the investigator for each annotation.

On the basis of the above evidence, the final draft of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire was presumed to have a high degree of content validity.

Validity of Pupils' Responses. One of the limitations of the study listed in Chapter I was the inability to ascertain whether students were giving genuine responses or whether they were providing responses which they thought to be culturally or socially approved. To encourage genuine

responses, the anonymity of responses was guaranteed. Additionally, in the directions for completing the instrument, a statement was made requesting the students to respond honestly. To discover whether or not students were giving valid responses, Thorndike (1941), Jefferson (1958), Steiert (1966) Schulte (1969) and Martin (1972) included among the annotations in their instruments a number of "ringers". Ringers were annotations of stories which the researchers believed no child would choose to read voluntarily but which they would read because of social pressures. The data of any child who responded positively to a certain number of these ringers was discarded. An examination of the ringer annotations in various instruments showed them all to be from the area of nonfiction. Because of the difficulty in developing ringer annotations in the area of fiction, this technique for ascertaining the validity of pupils' responses was not used in this study.

Certain informal means were used to gauge the validity of the students' responses to the instrument. Of the 217 children involved in the study, 99 made one or more erasures or alterations to their original responses. The investigator interpreted these changes as an indication of the careful attention being paid by the children to their responses. Only one child, a boy, gave the same response to all 36 annotations. His responses were all YES . One other boy responded NO to 35 annotations and ? to the thirty-sixth. Despite some indications that the children's

responses to the instrument were valid, in the absence of empirical evidence, the limitation noted in Chapter I must stand.

II. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Pilot Studies

In early May, 1973, a pilot study was conducted involving 20 children drawn from fifth grade classes in a school which was not part of the main study. At the request of the investigator, approximately even numbers of boys and girls were randomly selected from the participating school . The eleven girls and nine boys selected were either 10 or 11 years of age.

The pilot study was conducted for several reasons. Of prime concern was the question as to whether children could complete the instrument independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance. While the full study did not include consideration of the pupils' reading ability, the investigator requested that the pilot school identify those students in the sample who were reading at least one full grade level below a fifth grade reading level. Five students so indicated to the investigator were observed closely while they completed the instrument.

Another purpose of the pilot study was to ascertain the adequacy of the page of instructions which explained to the students how to complete the instrument. A final purpose was to discover the maximum length of time which

likely would be needed to complete the instrument. It was recognized that the attention span for the age group participating in the study made it imperative that the time involved in completing the instrument be relatively brief so as to facilitate maintaining a high level of attentiveness.

To control for the influence of the personality of the test administrator on the subjects, the original procedures called for the investigator to give the instrument to all the class groups. On the basis of the results of the pilot study, this procedure was discarded in favor of the classroom teachers administering the instrument. Although the instructions for completing the instrument that were read to and with the students made a point of inviting the students to raise their hands for assistance with words if needed, none of the students availed themselves of the help. Since the investigator knew there were at least five students participating in the pilot study who should likely have had difficulty with some of the words, the lack of requests for assistance was viewed as being unnatural and undesirable. The investigator interpreted the silence as a possible indication that the poor readers did not want to identify themselves to a stranger. Reasoning that poor readers would know that their classroom teacher would be aware of their reading ability, the investigator believed these students would be more likely to ask for assistance from their classroom teacher than a stranger. For this reason, in the main study the instrument

was administered by the classroom teacher.

The first student to finish the instrument took eight minutes while the last to finish, one of the students who had been identified as a poor reader, took 18 minutes. It was felt that the length of time taken to complete the instrument was within the attention span of fifth grade pupils.

The page of instructions read to the students was judged to be adequate. One problem with the completion of the test did arise though. Recognizing that students might accidentally miss doing some of the items, the last statement on the instrument, which was printed in upper case letters for emphasis, was an instruction to the students to check to see that they had made a response to all of the descriptive annotations. As the investigator collected the completed instruments, each was examined to see that it was totally completed. Omissions were found in three instruments. In two cases, one annotation had been missed and in the third instance the last page of the instrument containing four annotations had been omitted. To reduce the number of instruments whose data would have to be rejected because of being incomplete, an instruction was added to the teachers' directions for administering the instrument. Teachers were asked to check each instrument when the students reported they were finished and to return to the students those instruments which contained incomplete items.

Sample

The population from which the sample was drawn to investigate the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils consisted of all fifth grade pupils in the Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta. The sample of 229 children was composed of those children of eight heterogeneously grouped classes who were in attendance on the morning the instrument was administered. At the request of the investigator, the three schools used in the study were randomly selected by the Department of Research, Development and Information, Edmonton Public Schools and were situated in various parts of the City of Edmonton.

As research on reading interests has consistently shown that children's reading interests show a definite development by grade level and that children at all ages maintain interest in stories of children their own age (Purves and Beach, 1972, p.92), it was decided to reject the responses of those children who were either too young or too old to be considered normal fifth grade pupils. Because Edmonton Public Schools' entrance policy requires a child to be six years of age on or before the last day of the month of February following the child's September admission to school, a normal first grade class would be comprised of five and six year olds. Assuming a normal progression of one grade a year, a fifth grade class would then be made up of children aged ten and eleven.

TABLE II

AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Sex	Age 9	10	11	12	13	Total
Female	0	61	44	5	0	110
Male	0	63	49	5	2	119
TOTAL	0	124	93	10	2	229

Table II illustrates the age and sex distribution of the 229 children in the eight classrooms who completed the instrument used to identify their independent reading interests. Rather than overtly identifying and rejecting those students who were over age or under age, all students were requested to complete the instrument. On the first page of the instrument, the students were asked to indicate their sex by circling "BOY" or "GIRL" and to record their age. The instrument was completed by 110 girls and 119 boys. Of this number, twelve were rejected as seven of the boys and five of the girls were considered too old to be classified as normal fifth grade pupils. The final sample consisted of 217 children (105 girls and 112 boys).

Data Collection

The data on the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils were collected during the week of May 22 to May 25, 1973. A week to ten days prior to the data's being collected, the investigator met with the cooperating

classroom teachers to provide them with an opportunity to examine the instrument and to ask questions. The classroom teachers administered the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. The instructions to the students, which were printed on the first page, were read orally by the teacher with students reading them silently. Opportunity for any further explanations needed as to how to complete the instrument was provided. During the administration the teachers assisted with any reading problems. As each student indicated he or she was finished, the classroom teacher examined the instrument to make certain all items had been completed.

All participating classes in each school completed the instrument on the same day and during the same time period. In all cases, the instruments were given to the students shortly after 9 a.m. Because there was no time limit set for completing the instrument, the duration of the testing period for the eight classes was unequal but in no case was the total period less than 20 minutes or more than 35 minutes.

Settings for the test administration varied. In one school the fifth grade classes were in traditional classrooms while in another school the fifth graders were in a combination of traditional classrooms and open area spaces. In the third school, all the fifth grade pupils were in a large open area teaching space.

Treatment of the Data

To answer the first three research questions which dealt with the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils as a total group and then according to sex, a frequency distribution was used. To assist in the interpretation of the frequency scores, the raw scores were converted to a percentage of the possible number of responses for each category. A number of descriptive phrases were used to characterize the levels of interest in the various fiction categories. The phrases used to characterize interest were first developed by Thorndike (1941) and later by Martin (1972). Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the phrases and their matching percentage scores.

If 80 percent or more of the total possible responses to a category were YES, the descriptive phrase Very High Interest would be used in place of the percentage score and the data would be interpreted to mean that Very High Interest had been demonstrated in that category. If the converse occurred and 80 percent or more of the total possible responses were NO's, then the descriptive phrase Very High Dislike would be applied. The data, in turn, would be interpreted to mean that the students had exhibited Very High Dislike for the fiction category. The rest of the descriptive terms would be used in a like manner.

These groupings will be used to bring out more sharply trends in the data which might have been lost in a mass of detail if the results for each individual item had

been presented. While the range of scores to which a given term is applied may be considered to be arbitrary, the meaning is in any event specified and the usage will be unambiguous.

Percentage	Level of Interest
Over 80%	Very High
65 - 79%	High
50 - 64%	Moderate
35 - 49%	Low
Below 35%	Very Low

FIGURE 2

DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY APPLIED TO "YES" RESPONSES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSSIBLE RESPONSES

Percentage	Level of Dislike
Over 80%	Very High
65 - 79%	High
50 - 64%	Moderate
35 - 49%	Low
Below 35%	Very Low

FIGURE 3

DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY APPLIED TO "NO" RESPONSES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSSIBLE RESPONSES

III. EVALUATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

The two preceding sections of this chapter contained a description of the instrument that was used in the current study and a discussion of how the instrument was used.

This section reports a post-administration analysis of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire.

To ascertain the degree of reliability of fifth grade pupils' responses to the two annotations representing a single fiction category, the students' responses to the pairs of annotations were analyzed according to the procedures of the computer program NONP 09. This program, prepared by the Division of Educational Research Services of the University of Alberta, carried out a chi-square test for association. To ascertain the degree of association, the program converted the chi-square to a Pearson Coefficient of Contingency. The closer C is to one, the greater the degree of association."C can never be equal to 1, even if there is a perfect association between the attributes, and the maximum value of C depends on the number of rows and columns in the (contingency) table (Kenny & Keeping, 1954, p.303)." For the 3x3 table used in this study "the maximum value C can attain is .816 (Siegel, 1954, p.303)."

The results of the tests for association are shown in Table III. The analysis revealed that there was a relationship between the way in which children responded to the two annotations representing the same fiction categories. For 16 of the 18 fiction categories the level of significance of this association was at least at the .01 level and for 13 categories it was at the .001 level. For 16 of the categories it would have to be assumed that the children were responding deliberately in a similar or

TABLE III

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS IN EACH FICTION CATEGORY

Category	Chi-Square	Pearson's Contingency Co-efficient+	Probability
Adventure Story	40.863	.3981**	.000000
Animal-Realistic Observation	60.369	.4665**	.000000
Animal-Talking but True to Species	45.422	.4160**	.000000
Biographical Fiction	12.361	.2322	.014857
Car Story	16.111	.2629*	.002874
Family Story	34.332	.3696**	.000001
Fantasy	24.648	.3194**	.000059
Folktales	48.195	.4263**	.000000
Hero Tales	34.199	.3690**	.000001
Historical Fiction	20.872	.2962**	.000336
Mysteries	48.053	.4258**	.000000
Myths	13.897	.2453*	.007631
Regional Fiction	42.348	.4041**	.000000
Romance	75.847	.5089**	.000000
Science Fiction	96.805	.5554**	.000000
Sports Fiction	30.498	.3510**	.000000
Tall Tales	15.495	.2582*	.003777
Vocational Story	8.172	.1905	.085484

+Maximum Value = .816

*Significant at the .01 level

**Significant at the .001 level

reliable manner to the two annotations representing the same fiction category. For two categories, Biographical Fiction and the Vocational Story, p>.01. It would have to be concluded that any degree of similarity or association within the responses to these two pairs of annotations could have been due to chance rather than intent.

To the limitations set forth in Chapter I would have to be added another limitation. In interpreting any results dealing with the categories, Biographical Fiction and the Vocational Story, it must be kept in mind that it is possible that the children were answering randomly rather than reliably to the annotations representing these categories. Therefore, the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire may not have yielded reliable indications of fifth grade pupils' interests in these two areas of fiction.

If the instrument is to be used by other researchers, it will be necessary that modifications be made in the pairs of annotations representing Biographical Fiction and the Vocational Story. A consideration of the responses to Biographical Fiction according to the sex of the respondents provided an indication of the direction that modifications might take (Table IV). Boys' responses to the category appeared to be consistent. They made 41 YES responses to the first annotation and 44 to the second. Boys' responded NO 43 times to the first annotation and 49 times to the second. Girls, however, made 22 YES responses to the first annotation representing Biographical

Fiction and 51 YES responses to the second. At the same time they were saying NO 66 times to the first annotation but only 31 times to the second annotation. While both subjects of the Biographical Fiction category were male doctors and both were helping their fellow man, in the first annotation the aid was being given in the context of war. Possibly the factor which caused girls to reject this annotation was the context of violence.

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS REPRESENTING BIOGRAPHICAL FICTION BY TOTAL SAMPLE AND BY SEX

	Total Sample (N=217)		Boys (N=112)		Girls (N=105)	
	Annotation		Annotation		Annotation	
Response	#12	#34	#12	#34	#12	#34
YES	63	95	41	44	22	51
?	45	42	28	19	17	23
NO	109	80	43	49	66	31

In the area of the Vocational Story, once again girls appeared to be responding in a less reliable fashion than boys (Table V). Fifth grade boys made 31 and 21 YES responses and 62 and 72 NO responses respectively to the pair of annotations. On the other hand, girls answered YES 39 and 69 times and NO 47 and 18 times to the pair of annotations representing the Vocational Story. The

initial difficulty in writing this pair of annotations was finding vocations which would be of equal interest to boys and girls and which would not be viewed by the children as being more appropriate for one sex than the other. The vocational areas selected were policework and television. Both boys and girls favored the latter area more than the former although girls did so to a greater extent. It may be that girls viewed policework as a male oriented occupation.

TABLE V

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONSES TO THE TWO ANNOTATIONS REPRESENTING VOCATIONAL FICTION BY TOTAL SAMPLE AND BY SEX

	Total Sample (N=217)		Boys (N=112)		Girls (N=105)	
	Annotation		Annotation		Annotation	
Response	#4	#25	#4	#25	#4	#25
Yes	70	90	31	21	39	69
?	38	37	19	19	19	18
No	109	90	62	72	47	18

With the exception of the two aforementioned areas, the instrument appeared to measure the fiction categories reliably. For purposes of economy of time or to obtain information on reading interests at two different times of the year, it would seem possible to use only half of the items at a time to measure the independent reading interests

of fifth grade students.

IV. SUMMARY

Because of the difficulties encountered in trying to ascertain current independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils through a literature search, the investigator decided to carry out an original identification of their interests. A review of the methodologies used to investigate reading interests indicated that an instrument of the type designed by Thorndike was the best method. The development of the instrument commenced with the identification of the categories into which children's fiction could be divided. Parallel pairs of annotations were written for each of 18 fiction categories. A panel of judges was used to adjudicate the content validity of the instrument. The instrument, called an Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire, was subjected to a measure of readability.

A pilot study was carried out involving 20 children drawn from a school which was not participating in the main study. The purposes of the pilot study were (1) to ascertain whether or not the children could complete the instrument independently (2) to discover the adequacy of the page of instructions explaining how to complete the instrument and (3) to identify the maximum length of time likely necessary to complete the instrument.

Eight classes of fifth grade pupils selected by Edmonton Public School officials participated in completing

the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. The instrument was administered to 229 pupils in class groups by classroom teachers during the fourth week of May, 1973. Frequency distributions were used to determine the fiction categories in which the pupils showed interest, dislike or uncertainty.

A post-administration analysis of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire was carried out for purposes of estimating the reliability of pupils' responses to the pairs of annotations in the instrument. With the exception of two categories, the instrument appeared to give reliable indications of fifth grade pupils' reading interests.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURES FOR BASAL READER ANALYSIS

The last two phases of the study are the concern of this chapter. The chapter initially describes the sample of basal readers. An explanation is provided as to the methodology used to categorize the fiction content of these readers. The chapter concludes with a description of the treatment of the data derived from the analysis of the content of the basal reader.

I. THE SAMPLE OF BASAL READERS

The five readers which were used as the sample of basal readers and whose fiction content was analyzed were drawn from a 1972 revision of an annotated list of recommended reading materials prepared by the Curriculum Services Department of the Edmonton Public School Board. The sample consisted of all the readers cited in the listing which were identified as being basal in approach and specifically designed for the fifth grade level.

In Table VI the basal readers are listed alphabetically by the name of the series of which they are a part. The title of the basal is shown next followed by the copyright date and the number of pages of text. The last four columns are a breakdown of the basals' content in terms of the number of stories, poems, plays and novels which were

contained in each of the basals.

TABLE VI

ANALYSIS OF BASAL READERS BY COPYRIGHT DATE, PAGINATION AND CONTENT

Series and Publisher	Title	Copyright Date	Total No. of Pages	No. of Stories	No. of Poems	No. of Plays	No. of Novels
Canadian Ginn Basic Readers	Beyond the Horizon	1962	448	37	65	1	0
Canadian Heritage Readers - Dent	Under Canadian Skies	1962	436	33	29	2	0
Harper & Row Basic Reading Program	Crossroads	1966	448	31	11	3	0
The New Basic Readers Program W.J. Gage	Vistas	1969	512	26	19	0	1
Open Court Basic Readers Open Court	But Life Is Calling You	1970 2d. ed.	518	87	48	1	0
TOTALS				214	172	7	1

The copyright dates span an eight year period from 1962 to 1970. Readers in the sample varied in length from 436 pages to 518 pages with the two most recently published titles each over 500 pages. The number of fiction and nonfiction stories ranged from 26 to 87 with an average of 43. This average was inflated by the most recently published basal which contained stories of a shorter average

length than those found in the other four readers. All five basal readers contained poetry and four out of the five readers had from one to three plays. Only one reader contained a full length novel.

Table VII illustrates the number of fiction stories each reader contained that were analyzed and categorized according to the types of fiction which formed the basis of the Annotated Non-Titled Inventory. The number of stories in each reader that were considered to be fiction varied from 22 to 43. In terms of a percentage of the total number of stories in each reader, fiction comprised from 49.43 percent to 96.97 percent of the story content. Of the 214 stories contained in the five basal readers, 147 or 68.37 percent were fiction.

TABLE VII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FICTION STORIES IN THE BASAL READERS

Title	Total No. of Stories	No. of Fiction Stories	Fiction as % of Total Stories
Beyond the Horizon	37	27	72.92
Under Canadian Skies	33	32	96.97
Crossroads	31	22	70.97
Vistas	27*	23	85.19
But Life Is Calling You	87	43	49.43

*Includes a full length novel.

Beyond the Horizon and Crossroads were the only two basal readers from the sample of basal readers which were in use in the schools participating in the phase of the study which investigated the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils. One school used both readers while each of the other two schools used only one.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE BASAL READER FICTION CONTENT

During the months of April, May and June, 1973, the investigator read the prose contents, excluding plays, of the five basal readers in the sample. As each story was read it was initially categorized as being fiction or nonfiction. Those classified as fiction were then subcategorized and recorded according to the eighteen categories of fiction used as the basis for the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. Since the distinction between biographical fiction and fictionalized biography is often a fine one, for the purposes of this study, fictionalized biography containing the unspoken thoughts and invented conversations of the subject were categorized as biographical fiction. Whenever the basal reader had a teachers' manual that the investigator could obtain, it was read to discover if and how the authors or editors had categorized the stories.

To check on the accuracy of the investigator's subcategorization of the 147 fiction stories found in the five basal readers, a random sample of 10 percent of the stories were recategorized by an experienced children's

librarian who was doing graduate work and by a professional librarian who had completed courses in children's literature. Table VIII shows the results of the recategorization of the 15 stories. The inter-judge reliability was calculated according to the Arrington formula (1932, cited by Feifel and Lorge, 1950, p.5). The formula is $\frac{2x \text{ agreements}}{2x \text{ agreements} + \text{dis-agreements.}}$ To determine acceptable percentage of agreement, other studies using this formula were examined. On the basis of such studies, the percentages of agreement shown in Table VIII may be considered acceptable for the purposes of this study.

TABLE VIII

INTERJUDGE RELIABILITY ON THE SUBCATEGORIZATION OF FICTION STORIES

Independent Judges	Percentage Of Agreement
1* + 2	96.55
1 + 3	92.86
2 + 3	92.86

*Judge 1 was the researcher

III. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

In order to respond to the research questions listed in Chapter I which dealt with basal reader content, data of three types were noted. Of the 18 possible fiction categories each reader could contain, the total number and

specific categories found in each reader were recorded. Two quantitative measures were made of the fiction categories contained in a reader. For each basal the number of occurrences of a fiction category was recorded and shown as a percentage of the total number of fiction stories within the reader. As well the total pages devoted to a fiction category within a basal reader were calculated and recorded as a percentage of the total number of fiction pages in the reader. Pages within the stories made up entirely of illustrations were excluded from the pagination count. When a page contained text and an illustration, an estimate was made of the amount of the page devoted to text. In the count for an entire story, any fractional amount remaining was rounded off to the nearest whole number.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In this chapter, the results of the analysis of the data relating to the three purposes of the study are presented. The study's initial purpose was to identify the expressed independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction. The distribution of responses to the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire was analyzed according to the specific information sought by the three research questions which related to this phase of the study. The second section of the chapter deals with the data relating to the two research questions which had been posed to identify the categories of fiction which were included in five basal readers. The final segment of this chapter reports on the degree to which the fiction content of the five basal readers corresponded to the breadth and depth of fifth graders' independent reading interests.

I. INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS

Research Question One: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils in the Area of Fiction?

To ascertain the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils, a frequency distribution of their responses to the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire was used.

Since each of the 217 subjects was asked to make a response to two annotations representing a single fiction category, the number of possible responses for any one category totalled 434. Table IX sets forth the distribution of the responses for each of the 18 fiction categories.

An examination of fifth grade pupils' interests (Table X) reveals that none of the 18 fiction categories was of Very High Interest to the students as a whole. Only one category, Fantasy, was judged to be of High Interest. A noticeable gap of 56 YES responses separated Fantasy from four categories, Mysteries, Science Fiction, Adventure and Car Story which were of Moderate Interest to the children. Another large interval, this time of 51 YES responses clearly marked the division between the four categories of Moderate Interest and the nine categories which were of only Low Interest. These nine categories of Low Interest included the Family Story which only needed one more YES response to have been categorized as of Moderate Interest; Sports Fiction; Romance; the Animal Story in which the animal speaks but behaves appropriately for its species; Hero Tales; the other category of Animal Story in which the animal is reported from a realistic point of view; Biographical Fiction; and Folktales. Four categories: Myths, Historical Fiction, Tall Tales and Regional Fiction were revealed to be of Very Low Interest to fifth grade pupils. Categories of Very Low Interest should not be assumed to be of Very High Dislike. The student had

TABLE IX

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES (N=434)

Fiction Category	Yes Responses		? Responses		No Responses	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adventure	280	64.52	69	15.89	85	19.59
Animal-Realistic Observation	171	39.40	84	19.36	179	41.24
Animal-Talking but True to Species	179	41.24	93	21.43	162	37.33
Biographical Fiction	158	36.41	87	20.05	189	43.55
Car Story	267	61.52	81	18.66	86	19.82
Family Story	216	49.77	107	24.65	111	25.58
Fantasy	338	77.88	39	1.99	57	13.13
Folktales	158	36.41	72	16.59	204	47.00
Hero Tales	174	40.10	83	19.12	177	40.78
Historical Fiction	146	33.64	87	20.05	201	46.31
Mysteries	282	64.98	67	15.44	85	19.59
Myths	147	33.87	75	17.28	212	48.85
Regional Fiction	137	31.57	85	19.59	212	48.85
Romance	201	46.31	68	15.67	165	38.02
Science Fiction	281	64.75	59	13.59	94	21.66
Sports Fiction	207	47.69	94	21.66	133	30.65
Tall Tales	145	33.41	82	18.89	207	47.69
Vocational Story	160	36.87	75	17.28	199	45.85

TABLE X

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST (N=434)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	Yes Responses No.	%	Level of Interest
1.	Fantasy	338	77.88	High
2.	Mysteries	282	64.98	Moderate
3.	Science Fiction	281	64.75	Moderate
4.	Adventure	280	64.52	Moderate
5.	Car Stories	267	61.52	Moderate
6.	Family Story	216	49.77	Low
7.	Sports Fiction	207	47.69	Low
8.	Romance	201	46.31	Low
9.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	179	41.24	Low
10.	Hero Tales	174	40.10	Low
11.	Animal-Realistic Observation	171	39.40	Low
12.	Vocational Story	160	36.87	Low
13.	Biographical Fiction	158	36.41	Low
13.	Folktales	158	36.41	Low
15.	Myths	147	33.87	Very Low
16.	Historical Fiction	146	33.64	Very Low
17.	Tall Tales	145	33.41	Very Low
18.	Regional Fiction	137	31.57	Very Low

the opportunity to make one of three responses to each annotation and could show uncertainty as well as dislike for an annotation.

As a total group fifth graders did not show any strong dislike for any of the 18 fiction categories. In terms of the descriptive terminology used to describe the students' dislikes, the three phrases indicating the highest levels of dislike were not applicable. Table XI presents the fiction dislikes of fifth grade pupils. Eleven fiction categories were considered to be of Low Dislike. Included in this grouping were Myths, Regional Fiction, Tall Tales, Folktales, Historical Fiction, the Vocational Story, Biographical Fiction, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), Hero Tales, Romances and the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species). The remaining seven categories, Sports Fiction, Family Story, Science Fiction, Car Story, Adventure, Mysteries and Fantasy were considered to be of Very Low Dislike by the pupils.

Students could indicate uncertainty about whether or not they would like to read a story based on the information received from an annotation. Table XII ranks the categories according to the degree of uncertainty shown in a category. Descriptive terminology was not used to describe the degree or level of uncertainty. The application of the same pattern of descriptive terms used with YES and NO responses would have yielded Very Low Uncertainty being expressed about all 18 categories. Instead the uncertainty

TABLE XI

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NO RESPONSES
TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES
BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE
(N=434)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	No Responses No.	%	Level of Dislike
1.	Myths	212	48.85	Low
1.	Regional Fiction	212	48.85	Low
3.	Tall Tales	207	47.69	Low
4.	Folktales	204	47.00	Low
5.	Historical Fiction	201	46.31	Low
6.	Vocational Story	199	45.85	Low
7.	Biographical Fiction	189	43.55	Low
8.	Animal-Realistic Observation	179	41.24	Low
9.	Hero Tales	177	40.78	Low
10.	Romance	165	38.02	Low
11.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	162	37.33	Low
12.	Sports Fiction	133	30.65	Very Low
13.	Family Story	111	25.58	Very Low
14.	Science Fiction	94	21.66	Very Low
15.	Car Stories	86	19.82	Very Low
16.	Adventure	85	19.59	Very Low
16.	Mysteries	85	19.59	Very Low
18.	Fantasy	57	13.13	Very Low

TABLE XII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER (N=434)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	? Responses No.	? Responses %
1.	Family Story	107	24.65
2.	Sports Story	94	21.66
3.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	93	21.43
4.	Biographical Fiction	87	20.05
4.	Historical Fiction	87	20.05
6.	Regional Fiction	85	19.59
7.	Animal-Realistic Observation	84	19.36
8.	Hero Tales	83	19.12
9.	Tall Tales	82	18.89
10.	Car Story	81	18.66
11.	Myths	75	17.28
11.	Vocational Story	75	17.28
13.	Folktales	72	16.59
14.	Adventure	69	15.89
15.	Romance	68	15.67
16.	Mysteries	67	15.44
17.	Science Fiction	59	13.59
18.	Fantasy	39	8.99

responses should be viewed as potential YES or NO responses and as indications of areas for teachers to interact with children in attempting to encourage a positive alteration of the Uncertain response. For example, if the 107 responses of uncertainty in the Family Story were changed to YES responses then this fiction category would become one of High Interest. If, however, they were to become negative, Family Story would become an area of Moderate Dislike. In the majority of the fiction categories, almost one fifth of the total responses expressed uncertainty. Fantasy was the only fiction category in which less than 10 percent of the responses for a category were of the Uncertain type. It would appear for that category, at least, the children have taken definite positions.

In summary, fifth grade pupils indicated that they have a High Interest in Fantasy and Moderate Interest in Mysteries, Science Fiction, Adventure and Car Story. Fifth grade classes did not express strong dislikes although at least one third of the students showed a level of Low Dislike toward 11 of the categories.

Research Question Two: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Boys in the Area of Fiction?

The number of boys in the sample were 112. As each boy made two responses to each category, the total possible number of responses for any given fiction category was 224. Table XIII displays the distribution of fifth grade boys'

TABLE XIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES (N=224)

Fiction Category	Yes Responses		? Responses		No Responses	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adventure	159	70.98	27	12.05	38	16.96
Animal-Realistic Observation	64	28.57	36	16.07	124	55.36
Animal-Talking but True to Species	85	37.95	43	19.19	96	42.86
Biographical Fiction	85	37.95	47	20.98	92	41.07
Car Story	151	67.41	38	12.50	45	20.09
Family Story	81	36.16	59	26.34	84	37.50
Fantasy	154	68.75	27	12.05	43	19.19
Folktales	40	17.86	27	12.05	157	70.09
Hero Tales	106	47.32	34	15.18	84	37.50
Historical Fiction	112	50.00	36	16.07	76	33.93
Mysteries	133	59.38	36	16.07	55	24.55
Myths	61	27.23	40	18.86	123	54.91
Regional Fiction	36	16.07	48	21.43	140	62.50
Romance	53	23.66	35	15.63	136	60.71
Science Fiction	169	75.45	24	10.71	31	13.84
Sports Fiction	105	46.88	50	22.32	69	30.80
Tall Tales	83	37.05	33	14.73	108	48.22
Vocational Story	52	23.21	38	16.96	134	59.83

responses to each fiction category.

As can be seen in Table XIV fifth grade boys showed appreciable interest in one-third of the 18 fiction categories. No fiction category was strongly enough liked to be described as illustrating Very High Interest, but four fiction areas were rated as being at the High Interest Level. These categories were Science Fiction, Adventure, Fantasy and the Car Story. An eight percent interval separated the four categories of High Interest from the two categories, Mysteries and Historical Fiction, which were of Moderate Interest. Another third of the total number of fiction areas were rated as being of Low Interest. Hero Tales, Sports Fiction, Biographical Fiction, the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species), Tall Tales and the Family Story comprised the Low Interest category. The remaining third of the fiction categories were of Very Low Interest to fifth grade boys. This grouping was composed of the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), Myths, Romance, Vocational Story, Folktales and Regional Fiction.

While fifth grade boys demonstrated interest in one-third of the fiction categories, they also displayed an equal proportion of dislike (Table XV). Folktales was the category least liked by fifth grade boys and at a level of High Dislike. Regional Fiction, Romance, Vocational Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and Myths were also disliked, but at the level of Moderate Dislike. Categories for which Low Dislike was shown included Tall

TABLE XIV

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST (N=224)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	Yes Responses No.	%	Level of Interest
1.	Science Fiction	169	75.45	High
2.	Adventure	159	70.98	High
3.	Fantasy	154	68.75	High
4.	Car Story	151	67.41	High
5.	Mysteries	133	59.38	Moderate
6.	Historical Fiction	122	50.00	Moderate
7.	Hero Tales	106	47.32	Low
8.	Sports Fiction	105	46.88	Low
9.	Biographical Fiction	85	37.95	Low
9.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	85	37.95	Low
11.	Tall Tales	83	37.05	Low
12.	Family Story	81	36.16	Low
13.	Animal-Realistic Observation	64	28.57	Very Low
14.	Myths	61	27.23	Very Low
15.	Romance	53	23.66	Very Low
16.	Vocational Story	52	23.21	Very Low
17.	Folktales	40	17.86	Very Low
18.	Regional Fiction	36	16.07	Very Low

TABLE XV

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' NO RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE (N=224)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	No Responses No.	%	Level of Dislike
1.	Folktales	157	70.09	High
2.	Regional Fiction	140	62.50	Moderate
3.	Romance	136	60.71	Moderate
4.	Vocational Story	134	59.83	Moderate
5.	Animal-Realistic Observation	124	55.36	Moderate
6.	Myths	123	54.91	Moderate
7.	Tall Tales	108	48.22	Low
8.	Animals-Talking but True to Species	96	42.86	Low
9.	Biographical Fiction	92	41.07	Low
10.	Family Story	84	37.50	Low
10.	Hero Tales	84	37.50	Low
12.	Historical Fiction	76	33.93	Very Low
13.	Sports Fiction	69	30.80	Very Low
14.	Mysteries	55	24.55	Very Low
15.	Car Story	45	20.09	Very Low
16.	Fantasy	43	19.19	Very Low
17.	Adventure	38	16.96	Very Low
18.	Science Fiction	31	13.84	Very Low

Tales, Animal Stories (Talking but True to Species), Biographical Fiction, Family Story, and Hero Tales. Very Low Dislike was demonstrated in Historical Fiction, Sports Fiction, Mysteries, Car Story, Fantasy, Adventure and Science Fiction.

Fifth Grade boys demonstrated their greatest uncertainty about the Family Story (Table XVI) which had received almost equal YES (81) and NO (84) responses. Sports Fiction which ranked second in Uncertainty responses had been more liked (105 YES responses) than disliked (69 NO responses) by boys. Since for this category the Uncertainty responses were more frequently paired with YES responses than NO responses, it would appear that this fiction area is potentially of higher interest to fifth grade boys than their YES responses indicated. Conversely, with regard to the third ranked category of uncertainty, the Uncertain responses were more frequently connected with NO responses and therefore Regional Fiction may be viewed as being potentially more disliked by boys. The least amount of uncertainty of response was displayed for Science Fiction.

From the responses made by fifth grade boys on the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire, it would appear that their greatest interest in fiction lies in the areas of Science Fiction, Adventure and Fantasy, with slightly less interest being shown in Car Story, Mysteries and Historical Fiction. Definite dislike was evidenced by fifth grade boys toward Folktales with lesser dislike being displayed toward

TABLE XVI

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BOYS' UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER (N=224)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	? Responses No.	? Responses %
1.	Family Story	59	26.34
2.	Sports Fiction	50	22.32
3.	Regional Fiction	48	21.43
4.	Biographical Fiction	47	20.98
5.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	43	19.19
6.	Myths	40	17.86
7.	Vocational Story	38	16.96
8.	Animal-Realistic Observation	36	16.07
8.	Historical Fiction	36	16.07
8.	Mysteries	36	16.07
11.	Romance	35	15.63
12.	Hero Tales	34	15.18
13.	Tall Tales	33	14.73
14.	Car Story	28	12.50
15.	Adventure	27	12.05
15.	Fantasy	27	12.05
15.	Folktales	27	12.05
18.	Science Fiction	24	10.71

Regional Fiction, Romance, Vocational Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and Myths. Some uncertainty was expressed about all of the 18 fiction categories, with the most being shown toward the Family Story and the least toward Science Fiction, which was the fifth grade boys most favored category.

Research Question Three: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Girls in the Area of Fiction?

Of the total sample, 105 students were girls. As each girl made two responses to each of the fiction categories, the maximum number of responses to any one category was 210. The distribution of the responses of fifth grade girls for each category is set forth in Table XVII.

Fifth grade girls exhibited a great number of interests (Table XVIII). Very High Interest was expressed in Fantasy and a large gap of 35 YES responses existed between girls' first ranked interest and their second. Two fiction categories separated by only a single response were ranked second and third and were considered to be of High Interest. They were Mysteries and Romance. Seven fiction areas, the Family Story, Adventure, Folktales, the Car Story, Science Fiction, the Vocational Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) were of Moderate Interest. Low Interest was displayed toward Sports Fiction, the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species) and Myths. Biographical Fiction, Hero Tales, Regional Fiction, Tall Tales and Historical Fiction were of Very Low Interest.

TABLE XVII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES (N=210)

Fiction Category	Yes Responses		? Responses		No Responses	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adventure	121	57.62	42	20.00	47	22.38
Animal-Realistic Observation	107	50.95	48	22.86	55	26.19
Animal-Talking but True to Species	94	44.76	50	23.81	66	31.43
Biographical Fiction	73	34.76	40	19.05	97	46.19
Car Story	116	55.24	53	25.24	41	19.52
Family Story	135	64.29	48	22.86	27	12.86
Fantasy	184	87.62	12	5.71	14	6.67
Folktales	118	56.19	45	21.43	47	22.38
Hero Tales	68	32.38	49	23.33	93	44.29
Historical Fiction	34	16.19	51	24.29	125	59.52
Mysteries	149	70.95	31	14.76	30	14.29
Myths	86	40.95	35	16.67	89	42.38
Regional Fiction	64	30.48	65	30.95	81	38.57
Romance	148	70.48	33	15.71	29	13.81
Science Fiction	112	53.33	35	16.67	63	30.00
Sports Fiction	102	48.57	44	20.95	64	30.48
Tall Tales	62	29.52	49	23.33	99	47.14
Vocational Story	108	51.43	37	17.62	65	30.95

TABLE XVIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' YES RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF INTEREST (N=210)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	Yes Responses No.	%	Level of Interest
1.	Fantasy	184	87.62	Very High
2.	Mysteries	149	70.95	High
3.	Romance	148	70.48	High
4.	Family Story	135	64.29	Moderate
5.	Adventure	121	57.62	Moderate
6.	Folktales	118	56.19	Moderate
7.	Car Story	116	55.24	Moderate
8.	Science Fiction	112	53.33	Moderate
9.	Vocational Story	108	51.43	Moderate
10.	Animal-Realistic Observation	107	50.95	Moderate
11.	Sports Fiction	102	48.57	Low
12.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	94	44.76	Low
13.	Myths	86	40.95	Low
14.	Biographical Fiction	73	34.76	Very Low
15.	Hero Tales	68	32.38	Very Low
16.	Regional Fiction	64	30.48	Very Low
17.	Tall Tales	62	29.52	Very Low
18.	Historical Fiction	34	16.19	Very Low

While fifth grade girls had many areas of interest, their dislikes in fiction were limited to a single category, Historical Fiction, which was an area of Moderate Dislike (Table XIX). Five Fiction categories were of Low Dislike: Tall Tales, Biographical Fiction, Hero Tales, Myths, and Regional Fiction.

The remaining 12 fiction categories were of Very Low Dislike and consisted of the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species), the Vocational Story, Sports Fiction, Science Fiction, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) Adventure, Folktales, the Car Story, Mysteries, Romance, the Family Story and Fantasy.

In almost two-third of the fiction categories, at least twenty percent of the responses for these categories represented uncertainty (Table XX). Highest uncertainty was shown for Regional Fiction, a category of Very Low Interest and Low Dislike. The Car Story, an area of Moderate Interest and Very Low Dislike was ranked second in uncertainty. The single area of Moderate Dislike was ranked third in uncertainty. Fantasy, the fiction category of Very High Interest to fifth grade girls, had the least number of Uncertain responses.

The responses of fifth grade girls to the instrument would indicate that they have very wide interests in fiction as they expressed interest ranging from Moderate to Very High in 10 out of the 18 categories. Strongest dislike for fiction was restricted to a single area, Historical Fiction.

TABLE XIX

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' NO RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER OF LEVEL OF DISLIKE (N=210)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	No Responses No.	%	Level of Dislike
1.	Historical Fiction	125	59.52	Moderate
2.	Tall Tales	99	47.14	Low
3.	Biographical Fiction	97	46.19	Low
4.	Hero Tales	93	44.29	Low
5.	Myths	89	42.38	Low
6.	Regional Fiction	81	38.57	Low
7.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	66	31.43	Very Low
8.	Vocational Story	65	30.95	Very Low
9.	Sports Fiction	64	30.48	Very Low
10.	Science Fiction	63	30.00	Very Low
11.	Animal-Realistic Observation	55	26.19	Very Low
12.	Adventure	47	22.38	Very Low
12.	Folktales	47	22.38	Very Low
14.	Car Story	41	19.52	Very Low
15.	Mysteries	30	14.29	Very Low
16.	Romance	29	13.81	Very Low
17.	Family Story	27	12.86	Very Low
18.	Fantasy	14	6.67	Very Low

TABLE XX

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS' UNCERTAINTY RESPONSES TO THE EIGHTEEN FICTION CATEGORIES BY RANK ORDER (N=210)

Rank Order	Fiction Category	? Responses No.	%
1.	Regional Fiction	65	30.95
2.	Car Story	53	25.24
3.	Historical Fiction	51	24.29
4.	Animal-Talking but True to Species	50	23.81
5.	Hero Tales	49	23.33
5.	Tall Tales	49	23.33
7.	Animal-Realistic Observation	48	22.86
7.	Family Story	48	22.86
9.	Folktales	45	21.43
10.	Sports Fiction	44	20.95
11.	Adventure	42	20.00
12.	Biographical Fiction	40	19.05
13.	Vocational Story	37	17.62
14.	Myths	35	16.67
14.	Science Fiction	35	16.67
16.	Romance	33	15.71
17.	Mysteries	31	14.76
18.	Fantasy	12	5.71

Uncertainty towards the 18 fiction categories was at least at the twenty percent level for 11 of the categories.

Comparison and Summary of Fifth Grade Boy's and Girl's Independent Reading Interests in the Area of Fiction

The fifth grade girls had almost twice as many areas of interest in fiction as did the boys. When the interests of boys and girls were compared (Table XXI) it was seen that there were fiction categories which were of common interest to both. Of the six categories favored by boys, five were also of interest to girls. However Table XXII points out that while boys and girls share some interests, they did not like the categories to the same degree. Generally, the areas of interest common to both boys and girls were of more interest to boys than to girls. When the areas of interest to boys and girls were compared further (Table XXI), it was found that there were areas of conflict. While boys showed Moderate Interest in Historical Fiction, this category was the area of Moderate Dislike for girls. Similarily, four categories of interest to fifth grade girls were disliked by fifth grade boys. Girls showed High Interest in Romance while boys demonstrated Moderate Dislike for it. While girls had Moderate Interest in the Vocational Story and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) boys felt Moderate Dislike for both. The single area of High Dislike for boys, Folktales, was of Moderate Interest to girls.

TABLE XXI

FICTION CATEGORIES OF INTEREST TO BOYS AND GIRLS BY LEVEL OF INTEREST

Boys	
Fiction Category	Level of Interest
Science Fiction*	High
Adventure*	High
Fantasy*	High
Car Story*	High
Mysteries*	Moderate
Historical Fiction**	Moderate
Girls	
Fiction Category	Level of Interest
Fantasy*	Very High
Mysteries*	High
Romance***	High
Family Story	Moderate
Adventure*	Moderate
Folktales***	Moderate
Car Story*	Moderate
Science Fiction*	Moderate
Vocational Story ***	Moderate
Animal Story-Realistic Observation***	Moderate

*Denotes categories of interest common to boys and girls
**Denotes categories of fiction disliked by girls
***Denotes categories of fiction disliked by boys

TABLE XXII

FICTION CATEGORIES OF INTEREST

COMMON TO BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	Boys		Girls	
	Yes Responses % of Total	Level of Interest	Yes Responses % of Total	Level of Interest
Adventure	70.98	High	57.62	Moderate
Car Story	67.41	High	55.24	Moderate
Fantasy	68.75	High	87.62	Very High
Mysteries	59.38	Moderate	70.95	High
Science Fiction	75.45	High	53.33	Moderate

Fifth grade boys expressed dislike for a greater number of fiction categories than did girls (Table XXIII). Six fiction categories were of at least Moderate Dislike for boys and only one for girls. There was no area of common dislike. Both fifth grade boys and girls expressed some uncertainty about each of the eighteen fiction categories; however, the uncertainty about the fiction categories was more strongly felt by girls than boys. Almost three times as many fiction categories were expressed at the twenty percent level of uncertainty or higher by girls than by boys.

When sex differences are taken into account in identifying the fiction interests of fifth grade pupils, it can be seen that the response to Research Question One takes on a different interpretation. The five areas of interest to fifth grade pupils can now be seen as being the categories of interest common to boys and to girls. The remaining five areas of interest to girls are reported as being of Low Interest or Very Low Interest to fifth grade pupils because of the effect of the low number of YES responses of the boys. Similarily the absence of any areas of Moderate to Very High Dislike for the 18 categories of fiction is the result of the YES or Uncertain responses of the girls cancelling out the NO responses of the boys in the six areas of fiction disliked by fifth grade boys.

TABLE XXIII

FICTION CATEGORIES OF DISLIKE BY BOYS AND GIRLS

BOYS	
Fiction Category	Level of Dislike
Folktales	High
Regional Fiction	Moderate
Romance	Moderate
Vocational Story	Moderate
Animal-Realistic Observation	Moderate
Myths	Moderate
GIRLS	
Fiction Category	Level of Dislike
Historical Fiction	Moderate

II. FICTION CONTENT OF THE BASAL READERS

Research Question Four: What Categories of Fiction are Represented in each of the Basal Readers?

The presence of a fiction category in a basal reader is indicated by an X in Table XXIV. None of the sample of basal readers contained all of the fiction categories used in the study. Beyond the Horizon incorporated the greatest number of categories, 13, followed by But Life is Calling You which had 12. Under Canadian Skies included 10 fiction areas, Crossroads, 9, and Vistas had only 8 types of fiction. The average number of categories was 10.4 which represented 57.78 percent of the total universe of children's fiction used in the study.

Four categories of fiction were common to all of the basal readers. They were the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), Biographical Fiction, the Family Story and Folktales. Two areas of fiction, the Car Story and Romance, were not represented in any of the readers. Just Beyond the Horizon contained a Vocational Story. Beyond the Horizon and But Life Is Calling You were the only two basals to have stories which were categorized as the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species), Hero Tales and Science Fiction. Tall Tales were found in Crossroads and But Life is Calling You. Crossroads and Vistas did not include Adventure while Beyond the Horizon and But Life is Calling You omitted Mysteries. Myths were omitted from Under Canadian Skies

TABLE XXIV

FICTION CATEGORIES IN BASAL READERS

Fiction Category	Basal Readers				
	Under Canadian Skies	Beyond the Horizon	Crossroads	Vistas	But Life Is Calling You
Adventure Story	x	x			x
Animal-Realistic Observation	x	x	x	x	x
Animal-Talking but True to Species		x			x
Biographical Fiction	x	x	x	x	x
Car Story					
Family Story	x	x	x	x	x
Fantasy	x		x	x	x
Folktales	x	x	x	x	x
Hero Tales		x			x
Historical Fiction	x	x		x	x
Mysteries	x		x	x	
Myths		x	x		x
Regional Fiction	x	x		x	
Romance					
Science Fiction		x			x
Sports Fiction	x	x	x		
Tall Tales			x		x
Vocational Story		x			
TOTAL	10	13	9	8	12

and Vistas. Regional Fiction was a part of all readers but Crossroads and But Life is Calling You. The latter reader and Vistas ignored Sports Fiction as well. One reader, Beyond the Horizon, did not contain Fantasy while Crossroads was the only basal to omit Historical Fiction.

Research Question Five: In Terms of Numbers of Stories and Numbers of Pages, to What Extent is Each Category of Fiction Represented in Each Basal Reader?

As Table XXV indicates, there was a range in the number of stories found in each fiction category within each of the basal readers. In four of the basal readers, the number of stories in each fiction category varied from one to seven with the average range from one to six. But Life is Calling You had from one to four stories in 11 of the categories represented in the book while the twelfth category had 15 stories. The average number of stories in each of the categories ranged from 2.4 to 3.6.

In terms of the greatest number of stories each reader emphasized a different category. While one reader contained more stories of Biographical Fiction than any other category, a second had more stories from the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) category. Fantasy was the largest category in a third reader. A fourth reader had two categories, the Family Story and Historical Fiction, of equal story number strength. The final reader, in terms of number of stories, rated Folktales as being the most

TABLE XXV

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STORIES IN FICTION CATEGORIES BY BASAL READERS

Fiction Category	Basal Readers: Under Canadian Skies		Beyond the Horizon		Crossroads		Vistas		But Life Is Calling You	
	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total
Adventure Story	5	18.52	5	15.63	-	-	-	-	3	6.98
Animal-Realistic Observation	1	3.70	7*	21.88	1	4.55	4	17.39	3	6.98
Animal-Talking but True to Species	-	-	1	3.13	-	-	-	-	1	2.33
Biographical Fiction	6*	22.22	3	9.38	4	18.17	2	8.69	3	6.98
Car Story	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family Story	1	3.70	2	6.24	2	9.08	5*	21.74	2	4.65
Fantasy	1	3.70	-	-	6*	27.27	3	13.04	5	11.62
Folktales	3	11.12	4	12.50	5	22.73	1	4.35	15*	34.88
Hero Tales	-	-	2	6.24	-	-	-	-	1	2.33
Historical Fiction	4	14.82	2	6.24	-	-	5*	21.74	2	4.65
Mysteries	1	3.70	-	-	1	4.55	1	4.35	-	-
Myths	-	-	1	3.13	1	4.55	-	-	4	9.30
Regional Fiction	4	14.82	1	3.13	-	-	2	8.70	-	-
Romance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Science Fiction	-	-	2	6.24	-	-	-	-	2	4.65
Sports Fiction	1	3.70	1	3.13	1	4.55	-	-	-	-
Tall Tales	-	-	-	-	1	4.55	-	-	2	4.65
Vocational Story	-	-	1	3.13	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	27	100	32	100	22	100	23	100	43	100

*Fiction category of highest frequency within a basal reader

important category. The percentage of the total number of stories in a reader taken up by the major fiction category ranged in the five basal readers from 21.88 percent to 34.88 percent.

Of the ten fiction areas found in Under Canadian Skies, five categories, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), the Family Story, Fantasy, Mysteries and Sports Fiction, were represented by a single story. Three of the stories were Folktales. Two groups of four stories were of the Historical Fiction and Regional Fiction types while five stories were Adventures. The highest frequency of occurrence was Biographical Fiction which had six stories.

Beyond the Horizon contained 13 fiction categories. Of this number five had only single stories illustrating the categories. Those areas were the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species) Myths, Regional Fiction, Sport Fiction, and Vocational Stories. Four more categories, the Family Story, Hero Tales, Historical Fiction and Science Fiction, each contained two stories. Biographical Fiction in this reader was represented by three stories and Folktales by four. Five stories were found to be of the Adventure Story type. The Animal Story (Realistic Observation), with seven stories, was the largest fiction area.

Five of the nine fiction categories found in Crossroads were represented by a single story. These fiction areas were the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), Mysteries, Myths, Sports Fiction and Tall Tales. The

remaining four categories were present in differing numbers. Two stories were of the Family Story category and four were Biographical Fiction while five were Folktales. The largest category was Fantasy with six stories.

Vistas contained the fewest number of fiction categories. Of the eight, two, Folktales and Mysteries, were present by virtue of a single story. Two stories were of the Biographical Fiction category and two more were Regional Fiction. Fantasy was represented by three stories and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) by four. Two categories, the Family Story and Historical Fiction, each had five stories.

Twelve fiction categories were found in But Life is Calling You and of the twelve only one, Hero Tales, had but a single story. Four areas, the Family Story, Historical Fiction, Science Fiction and Tall Tales, each were represented by two stories. The Adventure Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation and Biographical Fiction had three stories. Four stories were found to be Myths and five to be Fantasy. Fifteen stories were Folktales.

Although four fiction categories were common to all five readers, there was little agreement in terms of the frequency of the category among readers. The Animal Story (Realistic Observation) was found once in two readers but seven times in another. One reader contained two stories of Biographical Fiction but another had six. A single reader had one Family Story while another had five. One

Folktale was found in one reader but another contained 15.

The number of stories from a particular fiction category compared with the number of stories from the other categories represented in a reader gave one indication of the category's relative importance. Another measure of the extent of representation of fiction categories in a reader was the number of pages of text given over to each of the categories. Table XXVI sets forth the number of pages of text in each basal reader which were devoted to the fiction categories present in the book.

Although the Adventure Story was the second largest fiction category in terms of numbers of stories in Under Canadian Skies, it ranked first in importance when it was considered in terms of the number of pages this category consitituted in the reader (51 or 22.47 percent). Biographical Fiction, first ranked in story frequency, was second in pages with 46 (20.26 percent). Historical Fiction and Regional Fiction each had more than 30 pages with 39 (19.18 percent) and 31 (13.66 percent) respectively. Less than 10 percent of the pages were devoted to each of the categories of the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), the Family Story, Fantasy, Folktales, Mysteries, and Sports Fiction. More than half of the fiction content of Under Canadian Skies was taken up by less than a third of the categories represented in the reader.

In Beyond the Horizon, once again less than a third of the fiction categories found in the reader constituted

TABLE XXVI

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PAGES IN FICTION CATEGORIES BY BASAL READERS

Fiction Category	Basal Readers: Under Canadian Skies		Beyond the Horizon		Crossroads		Vistas		But Life Is Calling You	
	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total	No. Pgs.	% of Total
Adventure Story	51	22.47*	40	15.15	-	-	-	-	14	6.86
Animal-Realistic Observation	6	2.64	60	22.73*	15	6.76	54	16.67	11	5.39
Animal-Talking but True to Species	-	-	8	3.03	-	-	-	-	10	4.90
Biographical Fiction	46	20.26	22	8.33	28	12.61	26	7.74	13	6.37
Car Story	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family Story	7	3.09	25	9.47	16	7.21	41	12.20	18	8.82
Fantasy	9	3.96	-	-	86	38.74*	37	11.01	39	19.12*
Folktales	15	6.61	28	10.61	29	13.06	9	2.68	35	17.16
Hero Tales	-	-	15	5.68	-	-	-	-	12	5.88
Historical Fiction	39	17.18	18	6.82	-	-	140	41.67*	7	3.43
Mysteries	14	6.17	-	-	22	9.91	12	3.57	-	-
Myths	-	-	9	3.41	3	1.35	-	-	15	7.35
Regional Fiction	31	13.66	11	4.17	-	-	15	4.46	-	-
Romance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Science Fiction	-	-	15	5.68	-	-	-	-	20	9.80
Sports Fiction	9	3.96	9	3.41	18	8.81	-	-	-	-
Tall Tales	-	-	-	-	5	2.25	-	-	10	4.90
Vocational Story	-	-	4	1.51	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	227	100	264	100	222	100	336	100	204	100

*Fiction Category within the reader containing the greatest number of pages.

more than a half of the total fiction pages. Sixty pages (22.73 percent) were of the category Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and 40 pages (15.15 percent) were Adventure Story. The only other category which made up at least 10 percent of the fiction content was Folktales. The remaining ten categories then each made up less than 10 percent of the total pages. They were the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species), Biographical Fiction, the Family Story, Hero Tales, Historical Fiction, Myths, Regional Fiction, Science Fiction, Sports Fiction and the Vocational Story.

Fantasy with 86 pages constituted 38.74 percent of the fiction content of Crossroads. With Folktales (29 pages or 13.06 percent), the two categories made up more than one half of the basal's fiction content. Excepting Biographical Fiction (28 pages or 12.61 percent) the remaining six categories, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), the Family Story, Mysteries, Myths, Sports Fiction and Tall Tales, each represented less than 10 percent of the fiction content.

Two fiction categories were responsible for more than one half of the pages of fiction in Vistas. Historical Fiction represented 41.67 percent (140 pages) of the content and the Animal Story another 16.67 percent (54 pages). Two other categories, the Family Story and Fantasy each made up more than 10 percent of the contents. Their percentages were 12.20 and 11.01 respectively. The four

remaining fiction areas while constituting half of the fiction categories found in the book, totalled less than 20 percent of its contents in terms of pages. They were Biographical Fiction (7.74 percent) Folktales (2.68 percent) Mysteries (3.57 percent) and Regional Fiction (4.46 percent).

The category, Fantasy, while only represented by five stories in But Life is Calling You was its most important area in terms of number of pages. The category consisting of 39 pages made up 19.12 percent of the fiction content. Folktales, with three times as many stories as Fantasy, had four fewer pages and only constituted 17.16 percent of the fiction content. The remaining ten fiction categories represented in But Life is Calling You each were less than 10 percent of the fiction content. These categories were the Adventure Story, the two types of Animal Stories, Biographical Fiction, the Family Story, Hero Tales, Historical Fiction, Myths, Science Fiction and Sports Fiction.

Within each reader the number of pages given to each fiction category varied. The difference in pages of the fiction category with the fewest pages and the category with the largest number of pages varied from a low of 32 pages (But Life is Calling You) to a high of 131 pages (Vistas).

Three of the basal readers placed their greatest emphasis in terms of number of pages on different fiction categories. In Under Canadian Skies, the category of

Adventure was the most important while in Beyond the Horizon it was the Animal Story (Realistic Observation). Vistas had as its most important category Historical Fiction. Crossroads and But Life is Calling You contained more pages of the Fantasy category than any other.

III. COMPARISON OF THE FICTION CONTENT OF THE BASAL READERS AND THE INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS OF FIFTH GRADE PUPILS

Research Question Six: Do the Basal Readers Contain the Categories of Fiction that were Favored by Fifth Grade Boys and Girls?

A comparison of the areas of fiction favored by fifth grade boys and the fiction categories contained in each of the basal readers that were liked by boys showed that none of the readers contained all of the categories boys liked (Table XXVII). Two readers, Under Canadian Skies and But Life is Calling You contained four of the six categories. Another two, Beyond the Horizon and Vistas had only half of the six fiction areas favored by boys. The remaining basal reader, Crossroads, contained only two of the boys' favored categories.

The Car Story was not found in any of the basal readers. None of the six categories was common to all five readers, but Fantasy and Historical Fiction were found in four basals. Science Fiction, fifth grade boys' most liked fiction category was part of just two readers, Beyond the

TABLE XXVII

BOYS' FAVORED FICTION CATEGORIES

IN BASAL READERS

Fiction Category	Basal Readers				
	Under Canadian Skies	Beyond the Horizon	Crossroads	Vistas	But Life is Calling You
Adventure	x	x			x
Car Story					
Fantasy	x		x	x	x
Historical Fiction	x	x		x	x
Mysteries	x		x	x	
Science Fiction		x			x
TOTAL	4	3	2	3	4

Horizon and But Life is Calling You.

Fifth grade girls demonstrated interest in ten fiction categories. As occurred with fifth grade boys, none of the basal readers contained all of the fiction categories liked by fifth grade girls (Table XXVIII). Three readers, Under Canadian Skies, Beyond the Horizon and But Life is Calling You had six of the categories liked by girls. Crossroads and Vistas each had five.

Neither the Car Story nor the Romance were found in any of the basal readers while the Vocational Story was found in only one. All five readers contained three categories favored by fifth grade girls. These categories were the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), the Family Story and Folktales.

Research Question Seven: Do Any of the Basal Readers Contain a Range and Depth of Fiction Categories that Correspond to the Expressed Favored Reading Interests of Fifth Grade (1) Boys (2) Girls?

Under Canadian Skies (Table XXIX). Of the ten fiction categories which were in this basal reader, four were of Moderate or High Interest to fifth grade boys. The four areas, Adventure, Fantasy, Historical Fiction and Mysteries accounted for 49.88 percent of the pages given to fiction.

Folktales, Regional Fiction and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) were of Moderate or High Dislike to boys. They comprised 22.91 percent of the basal's

TABLE XXVIII

GIRLS' FAVORED FICTION CATEGORIES IN BASAL READERS

Fiction Category	Basal Readers				
	Under Canadian Skies	Beyond the Horizon	Crossroads	Vistas	But Life is Calling You
Adventure	x	x			x
Animal-Realistic Observation	x	x	x	x	x
Car Story					
Family Story	x	x	x	x	x
Fantasy	x		x	x	x
Folktales	x	x	x	x	x
Mysteries	x		x	x	
Romance					
Science Fiction		x			x
Vocational Story		x			
TOTAL	6	6	5	5	6

TABLE XXIX

UNDER CANADIAN SKIES: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	% of Pages Devoted to Category	Level of Interest or Dislike	
		Boys	Girls
Adventure Story	22.47	High Interest	Moderate Interest
Biographical Fiction	20.26	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Historical Fiction	17.18	Moderate Interest	Moderate Dislike
Regional Fiction	13.66	Moderate Dislike	Very Low Interest
Folktales	6.61	High Dislike	Moderate Interest
Mysteries	6.17	Moderate Interest	High Interest
Fantasy	3.96	High Interest	Very High Interest
Sports Fiction	3.96	Low Interest	Low Interest
Family Story	3.09	Low Interest	Moderate Interest
Animal-Realistic Observation	2.64	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest

fiction pages. The remaining three categories found in Under Canadian Skies were of Low Interest to fifth grade boys. These three areas made up of 27.31 percent of the pages. In summary 50.22 percent of the fiction in terms of pages was of Low Interest or Moderate or High Dislike for fifth grade boys.

Categories of interest to fifth grade girls in Under Canadian Skies consisted of Fantasy, Mysteries, Adventure, Folktales, the Family Story and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation). The stories making up these categories accounted for 44.94 percent of the readers' pages of fiction.

Historical Fiction, the single category of fiction of Moderate Dislike by fifth grade girls made up 17.18 percent of the pages. Three other categories, Sports Fiction, Biographical Fiction and Regional Fiction, together comprising 37.88 percent of the fiction pages, were of Low or Very Low Interest to girls. In total, 55.06 percent of the fiction was of Low Interest, Very Low Interest or Moderate Dislike by fifth grade girls.

Although Under Canadian Skies had fewer categories of interest to boys (4) than to girls (6) it contained slightly more pages (4.94 percent) of fiction that were liked by boys than girls. However, at the same time, the reader had 5.73 percent more fiction pages that were disliked by boys than girls.

Beyond the Horizon (Table XXX). Two of the 13 fiction

TABLE XXX

BEYOND THE HORIZON: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	% of Pages Devoted to Category	Level of Interest or Dislike	
		Boys	Girls
Animal-Realistic Observation	22.73	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest
Adventure	15.15	High Interest	Moderate Interest
Folktales	10.61	High Dislike	Moderate Interest
Family Story	9.47	Low Interest	Moderate Interest
Biographical Fiction	8.33	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Historical Fiction	6.82	Moderate Interest	Moderate Dislike
Hero Tales	5.68	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Science Fiction	5.68	High Interest	Moderate Interest
Regional Fiction	4.17	Moderate Dislike	Very Low Interest
Myths	3.41	Moderate Dislike	Low Interest
Sports Fiction	3.41	Low Interest	Low Interest
Animal-Talking but True to Species	3.03	Low Interest	Low Interest
Vocational Story	1.51	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest

categories contained in this reader were of High Interest to fifth grade boys. The Adventure Story and Science Fiction accounted for 20.83 percent of the reader's content in terms of pages. Another 6.82 percent of the content was of Moderate Interest. The category with this designation was Historical Fiction. The areas of interest to fifth grade boys accounted for 27.65 percent of the fiction pages of Beyond the Horizon.

The reader contained one category of High Dislike to boys (Folktales) and four areas of Moderate Dislike. The four areas included the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) Regional Fiction, Myths and the Vocational Story. Together the five categories of dislike accounted for 42.43 percent of the book's fiction pages. The remaining five categories were all of Very Low Interest and constituted 29.92 percent of the pages. The Family Story, Biographical Fiction, Hero Tales, Sports Fiction and the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species) were the five areas. In all, 72.35 percent of the fiction pages of Beyond the Horizon were from categories disliked by fifth grade boys or that were of little interest to them.

Six fiction categories were of Moderate Interest to fifth grade girls. The Animal Story (Realistic Observation,) the Adventure Story, Folktales, the Family Story, Science Fiction and the Vocational Story made up 65.15 percent of the basal's pages.

Historical Fiction, constituting 6.82 percent of

Beyond the Horizon was the sole area of Moderate Dislike. Myths, Sports Fiction, the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species) were of Low Interest to girls and made up 9.85 percent of the pages. Another 18.18 percent of the pages consisted of stories of the categories Biographical Fiction, Hero Tales, and Regional Fiction which were of Very Low Interest to girls. For fifth grade girls areas of dislike and little interest accounted for 34.85 percent of the pages of Beyond the Horizon.

Beyond the Horizon contained only two fiction categories that were of interest to fifth grade boys but six that were of interest to girls. Only 27.65 percent of the pages were of interest to boys while 65.15 percent of the pages were of interest to fifth grade girls.

Crossroads (Table XXXI). Nine different fiction categories were found in Crossroads. Of these nine, Fantasy was of High Interest to fifth grade boys and Mysteries were of Moderate Interest. Respectively they accounted for 38.74 percent and 9.91 percent of the reader's total pages.

Three categories were not favored by boys. High Dislike was shown for Folktales (13.06 percent) and Moderate Dislike for the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and Myths (8.11 percent). The three areas constituted 21.17 percent of the fiction contents.

Low Interest was shown by fifth grade boys toward the Family Story, Biographical Fiction, Sports Fiction and Tall Tales which totalled 30.18 percent of the fiction

TABLE XXXI

CROSSROADS: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	% of Pages Devoted to Category	Level of Interest or Dislike	
		Boys	Girls
Fantasy	38.74	High Interest	Very High Interest
Folktales	13.06	High Dislike	Moderate Interest
Biographical Fiction	12.61	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Mysteries	9.91	Moderate Interest	High Interest
Sports Fiction	8.81	Low Interest	Low Interest
Family Story	7.21	Low Interest	Moderate Interest
Animal-Realistic Observation	6.76	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest
Tall Tales	2.25	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Myths	1.35	Moderate Dislike	Low Interest

pages. Together the areas of dislike and little interest made up 51.35 percent of the basal reader's pages.

Five of the nine fiction areas in Crossroads were of interest to fifth grade girls. Fantasy (38.74 percent) was of Very High Interest; Mysteries (9.91 percent) were of High Interest; and Folktales, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and the Family Story (27.03 percent) were of Moderate Interest to girls.

The single area of dislike by girls was omitted from this basal reader. Two categories were of Low Interest: Myths and Sports Fiction (9.46 percent). Another two areas of Very Low Interest were Tall Tales and Biographical Fiction (14.86 percent). The total percentage of pages of little interest to fifth grade girls was 24.32 percent.

In summary, Crossroads contained five areas of interest to girls and these five areas constituted 75.68 percent of the fiction pages while two areas constituting 48.65 percent of the fiction pages were of interest to fifth grade boys.

Vistas (Table XXXII). One of the eight fiction categories found in Vistas, Fantasy (11.01 percent), was of High Interest to fifth grade boys. Two other categories, Historical Fiction and Mysteries constituting 45.24 percent of the basal's content, were of Moderate Interest.

While three categories were of interest to boys, three others were disliked by them. Folktales (2.68 percent) were of High Dislike and the Animal Story

TABLE XXXII

VISTAS: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	% of Pages Devoted to Category	Level of Interest or Dislike	
		Boys	Girls
Historical Fiction	41.67	Moderate Interest	Moderate Dislike
Animal - Realistic Observation	16.67	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest
Family Story	12.20	Low Interest	Moderate Interest
Fantasy	11.01	High Interest	Very High Interest
Biographical Fiction	7.74	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Regional Fiction	4.46	Moderate Dislike	Very Low Interest
Mysteries	3.57	Moderate Interest	High Interest
Folktales	2.68	High Dislike	Moderate Interest

(Realistic Observation) and Regional Fiction (21.13 percent) were of Moderate Dislike. Another 19.94 percent of the fiction pages were taken up by the Family Story and Biographical Fiction, fiction areas of Low Dislike. In total, 43.75 percent of the basal's contents were of little interest or dislike.

Five fiction categories were of interest to fifth grade girls. Fantasy (11.01 percent) was of Very High Interest; Mysteries (3.57 percent) of High Interest; and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), the Family Story and Folktales (31.55 percent) were of Moderate Interest.

Vistas included Historical Fiction (41.67 percent), the sole area of Moderate Dislike on the part of fifth grade girls. Very Low Interest due to the inclusion of Biographical Fiction and Regional Fiction constituted 12.20 percent of the fiction pages. The two categories of Very Low Interest and the one of Moderate Dislike made up 53.87 percent of the fiction pages of Vistas.

Although just three of the eight fiction categories found in Vistas were of interest to fifth grade boys in comparison to the five categories of interest to girls, a greater amount of the fiction content in terms of pages was of interest to boys (56.25 percent) than to girls (46.13 percent).

But Life is Calling You (Table XXXIII). Four of the 13 fiction categories represented in this basal were of interest to fifth grade boys. Three areas constituting

TABLE XXXIII

BUT LIFE IS CALLING YOU: FICTION CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF INTEREST OR DISLIKE OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Fiction Category	% of Pages Devoted to Category	Level of Interest or Dislike	
		Boys	Girls
Fantasy	19.12	High Interest	Very High Interest
Folktales	17.16	High Dislike	Moderate Interest
Science Fiction	9.80	High Interest	Moderate Interest
Family Story	8.82	Low Interest	Moderate Interest
Myths	7.35	Moderate Dislike	Low Interest
Adventure	6.86	High Interest	Moderate Interest
Biographical Fiction	6.37	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Hero Tales	5.88	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Animal-Realistic Observation	5.39	Moderate Dislike	Moderate Interest
Animal-Talking but True to Species	4.90	Very Low Interest	Low Interest
Tall Tales	4.90	Low Interest	Very Low Interest
Historical Fiction	3.43	Moderate Interest	Moderate Dislike

35.78 percent of the fiction pages were of High Interest. The areas were Fantasy, Science Fiction and the Adventure Story. Historical Fiction (3.43 percent) was of Moderate Interest.

Dislike by boys was registered for three of the fiction categories in the reader. High Dislike was shown for Folktales (17.16 percent) and Moderate Dislike for the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and Myths (12.74 percent). Dislike was expressed for 29.90 percent of the fiction pages of the reader.

Four other categories constituting 25.97 percent of the pages were of Low Interest to boys. They were Tall Tales, Hero Tales, Biographical Fiction and the Family Story. As well, Very Low Interest was expressed for the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species - 4.90 percent). Areas of dislike and little interest accounted for 60.79 percent of the total number of fiction pages in <u>But Life is Calling You</u>.

Half of the twelve fiction categories in the basal reader were of interest to fifth grade readers. Fantasy (19.12 percent) was an area of Very High Interest to girls while Folktales, the Adventure Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) Science Fiction, and the Family Story (48.03 percent) were of Moderate Interest to girls.

While Historical Fiction was one of the categories in <u>But Life is Calling You</u>, it only constituted 3.43 percent of its contents. Two areas of Low Interest making

up 12.25 percent of the reader's contents were the Animal Story (Talking but True to Species) and Myths. Tall Tales, Hero Tales, and Biographical Fiction (17.15 percent) were of Very Low Interest to girls. In total, areas of little interest to girls and dislike by fifth grade girls constituted 32.83 percent of the fiction pages.

In conclusion, But Life is Calling You contained more categories of interest to girls (6) than to boys (4). As well a greater percentage of the total fiction content was devoted to categories of fiction favored by fifth grade girls (67.15 percent) than by fifth grade boys (39.21 percent).

Table XXXIV summarizes the number of categories of fiction favored by each sex found in each of the basal readers and the corresponding percentage of fiction pages allocated to these categories within each of the five basal readers in the sample.

IV. SUMMARY

This chapter contained the results of the analysis of the data relating to the three-fold purpose of the study.

Frequency distributions of the students' responses to the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire were used to identify the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils as a total group and by sex. Fifth graders as a whole were interested in only five fiction categories. In no case did a majority of pupils' responses reveal dislike

TABLE XXXIV

NUMBER OF CATEGORIES OF FICTION AND PERCENTAGE OF PAGES FAVORED BY BOYS AND GIRLS, BY BASAL READERS

Basal Title	Boys		Girls	
	No. of Categories of Interest	% of Pgs. of Interest	No. of Categories of Interest	% of Pgs. of Interest
Under Canadian Skies	4	49.88	6	44.94
Beyond the Horizon	3	27.65	6	65.15
Crossroads	2	48.65	5	75.68
Vistas	3	56.25	5	46.13
But Life is Calling You	4	39.21	6	67.15

for any of the fiction areas. By themselves, boys showed an interest in six categories and a dislike for another six categories. Girls had interest in ten areas of fiction and dislike for a single fiction category.

The analysis of the fiction content of the basal readers revealed that none of the five readers contained all of the 18 fiction categories that constituted the universe of children's fiction examined in this study. The largest number of fiction categories found in a basal was thirteen and the fewest, eight. An analysis of the fiction categories in the basal readers by number of stories and by number of pages revealed a great variation in the treatment of the categories both within and among the readers.

None of the basal readers examined in the study included all of the fiction categories favored by boys or girls. Of the boys' six areas of interest, four were the greatest number found in any basal and two categories the least. Six of the girls' ten favored fiction categories were located in three basals while the remaining two readers each had five categories.

When the fiction content of the basal readers was examined in terms of its interest to boys and girls, it was found that in only one instance did the amount that was of interest to boys exceed 50 percent of the total number of fiction pages of a reader. For girls, the opposite situation occurred; that is, in only one reader was less than 50 percent of the total number of fiction pages not of interest

to girls.

Implications arising from these findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

A summary of the purpose and design of the study will be presented in this chapter together with a summary and discussion of the findings, and conclusions. Educational implications and suggestions for further research will also be presented.

I. SUMMARY

Purpose

As some disagreement exists concerning the degree of pupil interest in the story content of basal readers, this study was undertaken in the hope that it would provide information which might assist in the resolution of the problem. Specifically the study sought to identify the relationship which exists between what children seek to read independently and the content they are required to read in basal readers. To identify the relationship, the study was carried out in three phases. The first step involved the identification of the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils while the second stage was concerned with the identification of fiction categories within basal readers. The final phase of the study endeavored to discover the degree to which the fiction content of the basal readers corresponded to the breadth and depth of fifth grader's independent reading interests.

Design

Two hundred and seventeen grade five pupils aged 10 and 11 from three elementary schools took part in the first phase of the study dealing with the identification of their independent reading interests. During the fourth week of May, 1973, the students in class groups completed the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. An instrument, called an Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire and based on Thorndike's fictitious annotated titles questionnaire, was designed by the investigator for the purpose of identifying the students' independent reading interests in the area of fiction. At two stages of the instrument's development, tests of content validity were carried out. Consisting of 18 pairs of descriptive annotations each of 40 ± 5 words representing 18 different fiction categories, the instrument called for the student to respond to each of the 36 annotations by circling YES, NO or ? (Uncertain) in answer to the question, "Would you like to read the story or one like it?" Each response was of equal value. Frequency distributions were calculated for each of the fiction categories on the basis of the responses of the total sample and the responses by sex.

To investigate the second phase of the study, a sample of five basal readers was used. These five readers were the total number of basal readers suitable for fifth grade pupils which were identified in an annotated list of recommended reading materials prepared by the Curriculum Services Department of the Edmonton Public School Board. The

investigator read the fiction content in prose form found in the basal readers and categorized each of the stories according to one of the 18 fiction areas used in developing the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire. As a check on the reliability of the investigator's categorization, a random sample of 10 percent of the stories was recategorized by two other judges. Data on the categories of fiction found in each basal reader were recorded in terms of the number of categories of fiction found in each reader, the number of stories in each category, and the number of pages in each reader devoted to each of the categories.

The final phase of the study involved comparing the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils, which had been ascertained in the first segment of the study, with the information about the fiction content of each of the basal readers derived from the second phase of the study. The relationship between fifth grade reading interests and the fiction content of basal readers was considered on two levels. The first level was simply the establishment of whether the fiction categories favored by fifth grade boys and fifth grade girls were included in each of the basal readers. The second level examined the degree to which the favored categories were found in the fiction portions of the basals. Degree was initially considered in terms of the number and percentage of times each fiction category was found in a reader. Secondly degree was weighed in terms of the number and percentage of pages devoted to each fiction

category with respect to the total number of fiction pages in each reader.

As the validity of the study's results hinged on information concerning independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils, statistical procedures were carried out in a post-administrative analysis of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire to determine the reliability of responses to the pairs of annotations representing the 18 fiction categories.

II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS OF FIFTH GRADE PUPILS

In Chapter I three questions were posed to clarify the first purpose of the study. That purpose was to identify the expressed reading interests of fifth grade pupils in the area of fiction. In this section of the chapter, following a restatement of each question, the findings relating to these questions are set forth and some conclusions drawn.

Research Question One: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Pupils in the Area of Fiction?

As a total group fifth graders expressed interest in only five fiction categories of the total number of 18. Interest for a category was considered to have been demonstrated when half or more of the possible number of responses which could be made for a category were of the YES variety. In descending rank order of interest the fiction categories

of interest to fifth grade pupils were Fantasy, Mysteries, Science Fiction, Adventure and Car Story.

Dislike for a fiction category occurred when half or more of the total number of possible responses to a category were NO. Using the 50 percent level as a criterion, none of the 18 categories was judged to be disliked by fifth grade pupils although half of the categories were in the 40 to 49 percent range.

An expression of uncertainty was directed at all the fiction categories but in no case did it exceed the 25 percent level.

The findings concerning the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils would appear to suggest that the pupils have interests limited to less than one third of the possible number of fiction categories. While their interests are restricted, they do not show any majority statement of dislike for any of the categories. The remaining 13 categories may then be thought of as areas of low interest and uncertainty. Before this assessment of the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils is accepted, the findings concerning the interests of each sex will be considered.

Research Question Two: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Boys in the Area of Fiction?

Fifth grade boys expressed interest in Science Fiction, the Adventure Story, Fantasy, the Car Story, Mysteries and Historical Fiction. As well they showed

dislike for another six categories. In descending order of intensity of dislike, the fiction areas were Folktales, Regional Fiction, Romance, the Vocational Story, the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) and Myths. If boys' reading interests are compared with the interests of fifth grade pupils, it can be seen that boys' interests are identical to those of the total fifth grade with the exception of Historical Fiction which is absent from the fifth grade listing. A degree of uncertainty was shown by fifth grade boys about all the fiction categories with the greatest uncertainty being displayed toward the Family Story.

Research Question Three: What are the Independent Reading Interests of Fifth Grade Girls in the Area of Fiction?

Girls showed interests in more than half of the categories of fiction. In rank order of interest, the categories were Fantasy, Mysteries, Romance, the Family Story, Adventure, Folktales, the Car Story, Science Fiction, the Vocational Story and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation). While girls' interests were broad, their dislikes were limited to a single area, Historical Fiction. Girls also displayed a degree of uncertainty about every category of fiction with the greatest amount shown about Regional Fiction.

That fifth grade boys and girls shared common reading interests was seen when their interests were compared. Girls enjoyed every fiction category that boys liked with the exception of Historical Fiction which was the girls'

single area of dislike. While the girls participated in boys' interests, they did so in varying degrees. For three categories, the Adventure Story, the Car Story and Science Fiction, boys' interests were stronger than girls while the remaining two categories, Fantasy and Mysteries, were better liked by girls. Boys' reactions toward the remainder of the categories liked by girls were generally unfavorable. Four of the categories, Romance, Folktales, the Vocational Story and the Animal Story (Realistic Observation) were among the boys' six areas of dislike.

In summary, boys had a greater number of areas of dislike than girls but fewer areas of interest. While boys and girls exhibited uncertainty about all of the categories, girls showed uncertainty to a greater degree indicating that boys made firmer responses to the fiction categories. Fifth grade reading interests were seen to be those areas of interest common to boys and girls. Accepting fifth grade interests at face value would be to ignore half of the interests of girls as well as all of the areas of dislike expressed by boys.

III. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE FICTION CONTENT OF BASAL READERS

The second purpose of the study was to identify the categories or types of fiction included in selected basal readers. Two questions were developed to clarify this purpose and in this section of the chapter they are restated.

The findings related to the questions are outlined followed by some conclusions based on the findings.

Research Question Four: What Categories of Fiction are Represented in Each of the Basal Readers?

Of the 18 fiction categories which could be present in a basal reader, 16 were found among the five readers, although the maximum number in any one reader was 13. The fewest categories contained in a basal were eight in Vistas. The fact that on the average a basal reader had only slightly more than half of the fiction categories making up the universe of fiction would indicate that basal readers are limited in their ability to introduce pupils to the wider world of children's literature while teaching them the skills of reading. In fact, the categories, the Car Story and Romance, were not found in any of the readers. While all five basals included the fiction categories the Animal Story (Realistic Observation), Biographical Fiction, the Family Story and Folktales, the similarity of treatment of these categories ended with their inclusion. Each basal treated the fiction categories common to the five readers with varying degrees of emphasis both in terms of the number of stories and the number of pages devoted to each of the categories.

Research Question Five: In Terms of Number of Stories and Number of Pages, to What Extent is Each Category of Fiction Represented in Each Basal Reader?

An analysis of the number of stories and the number

of pages within a reader devoted to each of the fiction categories found therein revealed little balance among the categories. In a reader the most frequent or largest category had on the average at least six times as many stories or 14 times as many pages as the smallest category. There was no agreement among the five readers as to what the most important fiction category was when importance was measured by the greatest number of stories in a category, and only two readers agreed on a category, Fantasy, when importance was considered in terms of the largest number of pages. Within readers, only half of the time did the two measurements yield the same category.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INDEPENDENT READING INTERESTS OF FIFTH GRADE PUPILS AND THE FICTION CONTENT OF BASAL READERS

The final purpose of the study sought to discover to what degree the fiction content of basal readers corresponded to the breadth and depth of fifth graders' independent reading interests. Two further research questions were developed in connection with this purpose. Following the procedure used in the preceding two sections of this chapter, the questions are restated and the findings related to the questions are provided as well as conclusions based on the findings.

Research Question Six: Do the Basal Readers Contain the Categories of Fiction that were Favored by Fifth Grade Boys and Girls?

Although none of the five basal readers contained all of the possible fiction categories, there remained the possibility that one or more included the fiction categories favored by either fifth grade boys or girls. However, in neither case did this possibility occur.

While boys had expressed majority interest in six fiction categories, no reader contained more than four of the categories. Two of the readers had four categories; two others had three; and the final reader had only two categories. Interestingly, the reader having the fewest fiction categories and the reader with the most fiction categories both contained only half of the fiction areas favored by boys. On the average the five basal readers contained stories from little more than half of the fiction categories favored by boys. None of the basals contained any stories from one of the categories favored by boys, the Car Story. There was no fiction category that was common to all of the readers. The favorite category of boys, Science Fiction, was part of just two readers.

In terms of their favored fiction categories being present in basal readers, girls did only slightly better than boys. Two of the readers contained half of the girls' ten areas of interest while the remaining three basals had six of the categories. The girls' area of highest interest,

Fantasy, was found in all but one of the readers. Two areas, the Car Story and Romance, the latter representing the category of third highest interest to girls, were not found in any of the readers.

To summarize, the basal readers contained more fiction categories that were favored by fifth grade girls than boys. If, however, the favored categories that were found in the basals are considered as percentages of the total number of categories favored by each sex, then the readers can be viewed as containing approximately equal proportions of each sexes' favored categories.

Research Question Seven: Do Any of the Basal Readers Contain a Range and Depth of Fiction Categories that Correspond to the Expressed Favored Reading Interest of Fifth Grade (1) Boys (2) Girls?

When the content of the basal readers was analyzed in terms of interest to fifth grade boys and girls, it was found to be generally of greater interest to girls than to boys. In only one reader, Vistas, did the amount of fiction that was of interest to boys exceed 50 percent of the total number of fiction pages, while the reverse situation was true with regard to girls. Even this one instance of the boys' amount of interesting fiction exceeding 50 percent must be viewed cautiously. It should be remembered that Vistas included a lengthy historical novel which was counted as part of the fiction content. Historical Fiction was a category favored by boys, but it was the only category

that received a majority of NO responses from girls. The reader which contained the least amount of fiction of interest to boys was Beyond the Horizon in which slightly more than one-quarter of the fiction pages were from categories favored by boys.

The basal reader containing the most content of interest to fifth grade girls was Crossroads, and the one containing the least was Under Canadian Skies. While there were two instances of basal readers having more fiction content of interest to boys than girls, the differences between the amounts of interest were only a third as large as the differences found when the basal content favored girls.

There was not a direct relationship between the number of fiction categories found in a basal reader and the amount of fiction content that was of interest to boys or girls. While Crossroads contained the fewest fiction categories of interest to girls and boys, more of its content was of interest to girls than any other reader, while the amount of its content of interest to boys surpassed two other readers, one containing twice as many categories of interest to boys as did Crossroads. Because each reader had a different emphasis on the number of pages representing each fiction category, it cannot be assumed that finding only a few categories in a reader to be of interest to boys or girls automatically meant that the reader would contain an equally small amount of fiction content of interest.

V. IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the findings and the conclusions of this study have pertinence for educators and for the publishers of reading texts.

The differences found between the reading interests of fifth grade boys and girls should function as a caution to the teacher. The findings of this study would indicate that to enumerate the independent reading interests of fifth grade pupils is really to set forth the areas of interest common to boys and girls. While the areas of common interest included all but one of the boys' interests, such an enumeration ignores fully one half of the girls' interests. Thus, in selecting fiction materials for the classroom or school library to be used for recreational or instructional purposes, the teacher must bear in mind the distinctive interests of fifth grade boys and girls, not just fifth grade pupils.

As well, the teacher should be mindful that the areas of interest and dislike identified in this study represent a majority statement of the students' responses to each fiction category. For every area of interest or dislike, there will be a number of students holding a contradictory or uncertain posture. The selection of materials, therefore, should not be limited simply to those fiction categories in which boys and girls showed interest, for even fiction categories of dislike were of interest to some students. While the teacher's awareness of the majority reading interests of students is important, the teacher must not

forget the interests of the individual student.

Attention should be paid to those fiction categories which ranked highest in responses showing uncertainty. The teacher has a definite function in extending and enriching students' reading interests. Fiction areas which ranked high in Uncertain responses should be viewed as fertile areas from which to select materials for activities, such as book talks, sharing periods, storytelling or puppet shows, which can be used to modify behavior. The Uncertain responses would indicate that fixed patterns of behavior with regard to a category have not formed. Activities, having a motivational function in extending students' reading interests, should not be limited solely to areas in which fifth grade boys and girls showed a high degree of uncertainty, but should be extended to the six fiction categories disliked by boys and the fiction category disliked by girls.

The findings of the study should also provide some guidance to teachers in selecting and using basal readers. The fact that only one basal reader had more than half of its content made up of areas of interest to boys suggests that in motivating boys to read a number of basal readers would be more useful than a single reader. Because of girls' interest patterns a single reader might suffice. Girls showed interest in ten categories and dislike in only one. The remaining fiction categories were areas of little interest or little dislike or uncertainty for girls.

Therefore, if a story in a reader were not intrinsically interesting to girls, at worst, mild dislike on the part of girls would be encountered by the teacher. Various techniques of extrinsic motivation would likely overcome the limited resistance on the part of girls. On the other hand, boys had very definite opinions about the fiction categories: one third were liked, one third were disliked, and the remaining third were of low interest, low dislike or uncertainty. Therefore, if a story in a basal reader was not from a category liked by boys, a teacher would face an even chance that it was from a category toward which the boys felt a majority level of dislike. Knowing which stories within a reader are likely to be of majority interest or dislike would aid the teacher in selecting stories which are intrinsically motivating, or in recognizing which stories will require a high degree of extrinsic motivation.

It would appear that the interest to boys and girls of the content of basal readers is a valid criterion to use when evaluating basal readers for purchase. If this criterion is not applied by a school jurisdiction, it should be applied by the teacher when selecting materials for his class.

For the publishers of the basal readers examined in this study, the findings suggest a number of areas for improvement in their materials. If the editors and publishers believe that one of the functions of a basal reader is to provide an introduction to the total realm of

children's fiction, then they need to increase the number of fiction categories they include. Should the editors and publishers regard the content as being solely motivational and therefore to be of highest appeal to the greatest number of pupils, modifications will have to be made to reduce areas of dislike to each sex and to increase the quantity of fiction from areas of interest to each sex. Because no reader can ever meet the interests of boys and girls simultaneously without omitting areas of interest to girls or including fiction categories of dislike to boys, publishers might consider producing separate basal readers for each sex. An alternate proposal for the publishers to consider is that they publish each story separately in booklet form rather than as part of the traditional book. For those publishers whose basal readers were not considered in this study, the methodology which was used within the study to compare the independent reading interests of fifth grade students and the fiction content of basal readers, could be applied by their editorial staff to obtain an indication of the interest of the content of their basals to fifth grade boys and girls.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

From the viewpoint of this study, there appear to be several suggestions for further research.

In a post-administration analysis of the Annotated Non-Titled Questionnaire that was set forth in Chapter III,

suggestions were made as to why girls may have responded less reliably than boys to the annotations representing Biographical Fiction and the Vocational Story. In order that appropriate modifications can be made in the instrument, further information must be obtained from the students, possibly through interviews, as to why they selected one annotation and rejected another.

While children of intermediate grades have indicated that they prefer fiction to nonfiction for recreational reading, nonfiction does form a part of their leisure time reading. As basal readers come to include more nonfiction so as to teach reading skills as part of the content areas, it will become increasingly important to know what intermediate grade pupils' independent reading interests are in the area of nonfiction. It is suggested, therefore, that a companion study to this one be undertaken to identify areas of nonfiction of interest to fifth grade pupils in order to provide information to publishers and educators. Further, the basal readers used in this study could be further analyzed in terms of their nonfiction content so as to make available a measure of their total interest to fifth grade boys and girls.

While the basal reader may be the foundation of a reading program, it is rarely the sole reader used to teach reading skills. Frequently teachers of reading use other readers variously labelled as enrichment, supplementary, or literary. It is recommended that investigations also

be conducted of the content and interest level of these readers.

A further suggestion is that this study be replicated at other grade levels. Such studies using similar instruments to investigate reading interests would provide longitudinal information on children's reading interests as well as providing an interest index of the various readers.

Finally, because the reading interests of fifth grade pupils may change it is recommended that investigations of this type be carried out periodically in order to keep the recommendations to authors, editors, teachers and textbook selection committees up-to-date.

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APPENDIX A

FICTION CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS

The ADVENTURE STORY is primarily concerned with plot. The action revolves about a hero(ine) who has ordinary, natural human strengths and weaknesses. The central character must attain some goal or object which is clearly identified early in the story, and the story ends when the object or goal has been successfully achieved. To attain the goal, the hero overcomes one or more challenges which are usually of a physical nature. In overcoming the perils or challenges, the central character frequently develops uncommon, heroic qualities.

ANIMAL STORY - REALISTIC OBSERVATION - This type of animal story is told from observation with fidelity to all the modern knowledge of a species. It may deal with animals by themselves in their own world as reliable observers have seen them, holding their own against their particular problems; or, it may deal with human beings and animals together. In this case, the animals are most frequently pets, recorded objectively as human beings see them. The animals are permitted no thoughts, except as people guess at them, and no language other than the barks or whines, etc. appropriate to their kind.

ANIMAL STORY - TALKING BUT TRUE TO SPECIES - In this type of animal story, the animal is scientifically true to its species in that its behavior and problems are those of the animal world, but it is given the human abilities of thoughts and speech.

BIOGRAPHICAL FICTION - A biography consisting primarily of imagined conversation and reconstructed action. For the purposes of this study, fictionalized biography, that is a biography which is grounded in thorough research but in which the author has dramatized certain events and personalized the subject by inventing dialogue and including the unspoken thoughts of the subject, will be categorized as biographical fiction.

The CAR STORY is a hybrid form of realistic fiction with elements of the vocational and adventure story. The central character, normally a male in his mid or late teens, is intensely involved with a machine and through the involvement comes to some real understanding about himself. There is usually a theme of competitiveness running through the story.

FAMILY STORY - That branch of realistic fiction that focuses on the daily routines of children in the elementary grades and which describes situations that directly relate to the children's own lives. Strong themes of love, reassurance and achievement prevail in the setting of the family unit, which may be of the single parent variety as well as the traditional two parent form. Plot revolves

around various family predicaments from the everyday to the significant crisis. The central character, a child, is shown coming to terms with the people and events around him.

FANTASY is the literature of outright invention. It creates a make-believe world with a logic all of its own which is supported by the realignment of experienced realities from an everyday world. The ordinary laws and procedures of life as we know them are suspended. Fantasy presents a world that is real only within the limits of the plot itself.

FOLKTALES are a part of the oral storytelling tradition of a people. They were told primarily to present moral values or as explanations of the environment. The folktale is usually a short, fast-moving story of an adventurous or comic or romantic nature. The plot and characters reflect the culture from which they come. Modern fairy tales utilize the form of the old traditional folktales but have an identifiable author.

HERO TALES - Stories of human heroes from mythology or folklore whose deeds have become so magnified that they make a whole cycle of tales. The hero, who represents the grandest potential of human aspiration as delineated by his culture or society, is ever-noble, always engaged in the worthiest of quests and fully confident in his ability to overcome every obstacle encountered in fulfilling his destiny. Representative of this category would be the Greek epics, the Norse sagas and the English epics such as Robin Hood and King Arthur.

HISTORICAL FICTION is an historically accurate reconstruction of life in the past in an attempt to recapture the atmosphere or flavor of another time or age. Imaginary characters and historically real characters are portrayed in realistic terms within the context of an historical setting. The principal figures, usually children, behave in a manner appropriate to the historical period and may be direct participants in historically significant happenings or they may move just on the periphery of important events. The theme may be either historical or universal.

MYSTERIES, characterized by fast action and suspense, contain a series of clues to solve a problem which may involve such elements as secret codes, lost treasures or mysterious characters. The mystery should provide the reader with all the information that is available to the central character(s), usually one or more children, who attempt(s) to solve the problem intellectually before the reader. Unlike adult "whodunits", the juvenile mystery infrequently involves murder or violence.

MYTHS are the type of story that ancient man composed to explain life phenomena without the aid of a fully developed method of scientific investigation or to perpetuate the heroic deeds of gods and men. Myths can be divided into two broad categories. The first are the explanatory myths which interpret the creation and causes of natural phenomena (including the pourquoi myths) and the second group are the exemplary myths which deal with gods, heroes, and other persons whose actions a people felt to be worthy of emulation.

REGIONAL FICTION (including CULTURAL, ETHNIC and RELIGIOUS MINORITIES) Stories which create a sympathetic picture of life elsewhere and which draw attention to those things which children of different cultures have in common. They provide a picture of everyday struggles of everyday characters caught in and influenced by their particular environment. Frequently these stories do not have a particularly tight, gripping or original story line or close original characterization, but rather tend to depend for their interest on the lure of information, the sense of realness they can convey or the novelty or contrast of a new setting or situation.

ROMANCE is a form of realistic fiction revolving about character and emotion rather than action. The central character usually a teenage girl, becomes romantically interested in a boy. Various complications interfere with the successful development of their relationship. These complications are resolved, either successfully or unsuccessfully, but despite the outcome, the major characters have a greater understanding of themselves.

SCIENCE FICTION - A form of fantasy which is based upon scientific fact or scientific possibilities that have not yet been proven, and which relies upon the reader's acceptance of the miracles of technology and scientific adventure.

SPORTS FICTION - A hybrid form of realistic and vocational fiction with elements of the adventure story. Along with the story may come some information about the techniques used in a specific activity. Frequently these stories are written to a formula plot in which the beginner in a sport rises to heights of glory and acceptance by all. As well, the plot, which may be thin, is wrapped about long game sequences.

TALL TALES contain blatant exaggeration to produce humor. A swaggering hero does the outrageously, exaggerated impossible with nonchalance. The tale, despite its containing flagrant "lies", contains a great show of reasonableness and accuracy and is narrated with a straight face and every similitude of truth so as to yield hilarious lunacy.

VOCATIONAL STORY - A form of fiction in which a simple and really plotless story about one or more people going through a task, a routine or an occupation, is used as a vehicle for transmitting information. In such stories, the slight story line and characterization are secondary to the interest generated by the facts.

APPENDIX B

KEYS TO THE ANNOTATED NON-TITLED QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Key by Annotation Number
II. Key by Fiction Category

KEYS TO THE ANNOTATED NON-TITLED QUESTIONNAIRE

I. INSTRUMENT KEY BY ANNOTATION NUMBER

Item No.	Category	Item No.	Category
1.	Historical Fiction	19.	Regional Fiction
2.	Car Story	20.	Historical Fiction
3.	Sports Fiction	21.	Science Fiction
4.	Vocational Story	22.	Sports Fiction
5.	Fantasy	23.	Animal Story - Talking but True to Species
6.	Hero Tales	24.	Hero Tales
7.	Regional Fiction	25.	Vocational Story
8.	Science Fiction	26.	Car Story
9.	Animal Story - Talking but True to Species	27.	Fantasy
10.	Romance	28.	Tall Tales
11.	Tall Tales	29.	Folktales
12.	Biographical Fiction	30.	Animal Story - Realistic Observation
13.	Myths	31.	Romance
14.	Mysteries	32.	Myths
15.	Folktales	33.	Mysteries
16.	Adventure Story	34.	Biographical Fiction
17.	Family Story	35.	Adventure Story
18.	Animal Story - Realistic Observation	36.	Family Story

II. INSTRUMENT KEY BY FICTION CATEGORY

Category	Item Nos.	Category	Item Nos.
Adventure	16;35	Historical Fiction	1;20
Animal-Realistic Observation	18;30	Mysteries	14;33
Animal-Talking but True to Species	9;23	Myths	13;32
Biographical Fiction	12;34	Regional Fiction	7;19
Car Story	2;26	Romance	10;31
Family Story	17;36	Science Fiction	8;21
Fantasy	5;27	Sports Fiction	3;22
Folktales	15;29	Tall Tales	11;28
Hero Tales	6;24	Vocational Story	4;25

APPENDIX C

ANNOTATED NON-TITLED QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle one BOY GIRL AGE _____

READ THE FOLLOWING SILENTLY WHILE IT IS BEING READ TO YOU.

This is not a test. No one will grade this paper or give it a mark. There are no right or wrong answers. These items are for the purpose of finding out what boys and girls like to read. The more that is known about what you like to read, the more possibility there is to supply you with stories you will enjoy reading.

On the following pages, there are some descriptions of a number of stories or books. You will not have read these stories because you have never had a chance to read them. However, the description of each story will give you an idea of what each story is about.

If you think that you would like to read the story or one like it, put a circle around **YES**, like this:

(YES) NO ?

If you think you would <u>not</u> like to read the story or one like it, put a circle around NO, like this:

YES (NO) ?

If you cannot make up your mind whether you would like to read the story or not, put a circle around the question mark, like this:

YES NO (?)

Remember, we are trying to find out what you <u>really</u> like to read. Don't choose stories you think you ought to read, or ones which you think your teacher would want you to read. Do choose the items <u>you would really like to read</u>.

Do you have any questions before you begin?

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU NEED ANY HELP WITH ANY OF THE WORDS AND WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE ITEMS.

Now, turn the page and begin!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

1. Jeb, a young constable in the North West Mounted Police, finds himself involved in the Riel Rebellion of 1885. With other Mounties, he fights in the battle against the Metis at Duck Lake. Later he helps to track down Louis Riel. YES NO ?

2. Chett and his friend Henry find an old motorcycle in a barn. Secretly they fix it up and learn how to ride it. When Chett tells his father that they want to use it in a hill climb race, he refuses to let them. YES NO ?

3. Because people say mean things about Colin after his school's football team loses the championship, Colin is determined never to play again. When he goes to a new school, he finds that all the students expect him to help their team. YES NO ?

4. Dean and Dianne become police cadets. They go with a policeman and policewoman to observe what they do. They watch fingerprinting, go to the shooting range, take some karate training and ride in police cars. YES NO ?

5. Neil and Sheri are sailing on a lake when they are caught in a strange storm. They find themselves carried back in time 1000 years to a strange land called T'Pahl. There they become involved in helping the people free themselves from an ancient curse. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

---

6. Sir Lancelot wishes to become a member of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table. In a tournament he has to prove he is brave and skilled as a knight. His main opponent is the evil Sir Modred, the Black Knight. YES NO ?

---

7. Raman, the son of a poor woodcutter in the hill country of Southern India, is the first of his village to go to school. He dreams of being a scholar, but may be forced to leave school to help support the family. YES NO ?

---

8. When a radiation device on the space ship Solar Queen causes part of the live cargo to go wild, the ship must land at a deserted planet. The crew members attempt to repair the ship and try to escape. YES NO ?

---

9. Ah-Leek, a gray seal, tells about his life. He remembers that his mother was shot by seal hunters, and that he was chased by killer whales and sharks. He recalls how he got terribly sick by swimming through some oil. YES NO ?

---

10. At school Susan becomes attracted to Charley whose parents own a wrecking company. Susan then finds that her family and friends do not think Charley is the proper boyfriend for a lawyer's daughter. They want her to date another lawyer's son. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

11. Saskatchewan Sam, the world's best farmer, is bothered by grasshoppers. He grows such big corn that it wins all the prizes at the fair. When the hall becomes hot, the corn begins to pop. The loud noise scares the grasshoppers out of the country. YES NO ?

12. Dr. Norman Bethune believes that a doctor's duty is to help others. When he learns that the soldiers fighting in the Spanish Civil War need doctors, he rushes over to help them. Later he goes to aid the Chinese in their fight against the Japanese. YES NO ?

13. After the god Jupiter made Man, he also made Woman. Jupiter gave her a box and told her never to open it. Her curiosity became so great, she peeped in. Suddenly out flew many ugly creatures. And that's how Evil came into the world. YES NO ?

14. When Roger goes to the dentist's office to have his tooth pulled, he finds Dr. Butterick tied up in his own chair. Roger quickly locates a suspect, but that proves to be only the first step in solving the case. YES NO ?

15. Long ago a beautiful princess enjoyed the songs that a poor fisherman, who was really a prince, sang. When he asked to be her husband, she refused because he was ugly. Too late she realized that music's beauty is more important than an ugly face. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

16. The Scouts' camping trip in the Finger Hills has to be cut short because of a snow storm warning. In the haste, Alex is left behind by mistake. For the next 48 hours, while the blizzard rages, he must struggle to live. YES NO ?

17. Steven's life is upset when his mother and stepfather are killed in an automobile accident. His real father, whom he has never seen, shows up to claim Steve. Steve reluctantly joins his father and enters a completely new life. YES NO ?

18. Georgina finds Bandit, an orphan raccoon kitten. She bottle feeds him and raises him until he is old enough to find his own food. When Bandit is fully grown, Georgina wonders if she should let him return to the forest. YES NO ?

19. Hing Lon lives with his large family on a fishing junk in Hong Kong. He longs to go to school, but there is only enough money to send his sister, Lee. Together, they build kites to sell in the market for extra money for Hing. YES NO ?

20. Jacob is the stable boy at the Tweedgate Inn. There, in 1837, he hears William Lyon Mackenzie planning to rebel against the government. He steals a horse and rides to warn the government troops. Later he watches the two sides battle at Montgomery's Tavern. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

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21. While exploring the surface of Mars, Ralph and his friend Greg fall into a deep crater. When they try to get out, they find that the plants that are in the crater are really the Martians everyone has been seeking. YES NO ?

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22. Hank's father, a big league baseball player, pushes Hank into playing baseball. When Hank moves to a new town, he sees his chance to quit, but when the boys find out how good he is, they want him to join their Little League Team. YES NO ?

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23. Oolakuk, a female caribou in Canada's Arctic, describes life in a caribou herd. She recalls attacks by a wolf pack, the dangers of Eskimo hunters, raging blizzards and the long journeys across the Tundra in search of food. YES NO ?

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24. When Little John falls into the hands of the Sheriff of Nottingham, Robin Hood leads his men to rescue him. Unknown to Robin, the Sheriff has set a trap to capture all the men of Robin's merry band of archers. YES NO ?

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25. Sean and Sharon want to work in Television. Their neighbor, who works for the local T.V. station, gets them summer jobs on the show TEEN TIME. They meet all the people needed to put on the show. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

26. Chuck loses his driver's license for speeding. He helps Doug, his cousin, build a racing car. On the day of the final race, Doug becomes ill and asks Chuck to take his place as the driver. YES NO ?

27. Tyler and Tara meet the ghosts of two children who died in an accident 150 years ago. The ghosts want help to change the pattern of time so that the accident won't happen. Tyler and Tara go back in time to try to aid them. YES NO ?

28. Bucking Barney is Alberta's finest cowboy. By himself he drove a herd of 1000 cattle to market. Someone said that there is a herd Barney cannot drive. And that's why Barney tries to corral a herd of whales in the Pacific Ocean. YES NO ?

29. Once a pretty maiden met a funny little man in the forest. He gave her three wishes. In return she was to marry him in three years. She forgot her promise and married another. Then she learned what happens to those who don't keep promises. YES NO ?

30. Michelle is given Waddles, a recently hatched Canada Goose. All summer long Michelle watches Waddles learn to swim, to feed and to fly. When fall comes, Michelle wonders whether or not she should let him fly south with the wild geese. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

31. Doreen meets John while working after school at an ice cream shop. She immediately likes him. He asks her to go to the big dance, and she accepts. Then Steve, the football team captain, asks her also, and she does not know what to do. YES NO ?

32. The Sioux Indians tell about how the Sun came to be. The Sunflower with its big yellow face made everyone happy. The people decided that the whole world should see Sunflower's face. They threw him higher and higher until! YES NO ?

33. While on a train, Peter sees a man he had talked to earlier jump from the train. Later a suspicious woman asks him about the man. When Peter finds a coded message in his pocket, he tries to learn what all the events mean. YES NO ?

34. Dr. Frederick Banting is just a young boy when he sees his best friend die of diabetes. He decides that when he grows up, he will find a cure for this disease. The story tells how he goes about discovering insulin. YES NO ?

35. When the single-engine plane in which Arnold and his parents are traveling crashes in the moutains, Arnold's father is injured, and the radio is knocked out. Arnold must go for help through the snow and down the mountain. YES NO ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ THE STORY OR ONE LIKE IT?

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36. After Jeff's parents are divorced, Jeff and his mother move to an apartment. Jeff's mother gets a job, and now often is too tired to play with him. Jeff meets Ralph Walters who runs a Boy's Club and starts to find new interests. YES NO ?

THANK YOU! WOULD YOU CHECK THROUGH THE PAGES AGAIN TO BE CERTAIN YOU DID EACH OF THE ITEMS.